

ROBERT E. BUSWELL JR.

The Formation of Ch'an Ideology in China and Korea

*The Vajrasamādhi-Sūtra,
a Buddhist Apocryphon*



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in China and Korea*

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OF CH'AN IDEOLOGY
IN CHINA AND KOREA

The *Vajrasamādhī-Sūtra*,
a Buddhist Apocryphon

ROBERT E. BUSWELL, JR.



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PREFACE

This book began as an examination of syncretic tendencies in Korean Buddhist thought and was intended to allow me to combine work in two areas of Buddhist studies that particularly interested me: Korean Buddhist and especially Sōn (Zen) philosophy, and indigenous Chinese Buddhist scriptures. In my earlier book, *The Korean Approach to Zen: The Collected Works of Chinul*, I had surveyed the attempts during the Koryŏ dynasty to unify the Sōn and doctrinal schools of medieval Korean Buddhism but had been able but to broach the possible antecedents of this tendency in earlier Korean thought. Looking for its origins, I decided to turn to the works of Wŏnhyo, where many of the distinctive features that characterize later Korean Buddhism may be traced. Among Wŏnhyo's treatises, his *Exposition of the Book of Adamantine Absorption* seemed to provide the most thorough and mature outline of his syncretic vision. As that commentary was also based on what was thought to be an indigenous Chinese scripture, I thought that a study of his *Exposition* might also provide some valuable indications as to the role such "apocryphal" sūtras played in the development of uniquely East Asian forms of Buddhism.

But as I read the scripture on which that commentary was based—the *Book of Adamantine Absorption*, or the *Vajrasamādhi-sūtra* as it is commonly known in Western scholarship—I began to feel increasingly uncomfortable with earlier work on the sūtra itself. It ultimately became clear to me that the significance of Wŏnhyo's commentary in the development of Korean Buddhist thought would be forthcoming only by undertaking first a thorough treatment of the *Vajrasamādhi* itself. In particular, the pronounced Sōn elements in the text, to which Wŏnhyo was completely oblivious, immediately attracted my attention and suggested that there was more to the scripture than Wŏnhyo himself had known. The principal focus of my research therefore changed: rather than examining the role of Wŏnhyo's commentary in forging a syncretic outlook toward Buddhist doctrine, I instead would attempt a wholesale reevaluation of the *Vajrasamādhi* itself, including its dating, provenance, authorship, and philosophy. That reevaluation led in turn

to an extensive exploration of the formation of Ch'an ideology in both China and Korea—hence the title of the book. This contextualization will suggest that it is no longer tenable to treat East Asian Buddhism in terms of its separate national traditions. I propose we must look instead for a broader “East Asian” tradition of Buddhism, which is something more than its Chinese, Korean, Japanese, or Vietnamese constituents.

This new vision of the *Vajrasamādhi* and its importance in East Asian Buddhism is presented in part 1. Chapter 1 discusses the background of the *Vajrasamādhi* and critiques traditional views about its origins. In chapter 2, I turn to the biographies of Wŏnhyo to ferret out information on the dating and provenance of the sūtra. Chapter 3 discusses the *Vajrasamādhi*'s attempts to draw out the practical implications of the fundamental sinitic doctrine of the inherence of enlightenment in all beings. The last chapter explores the evolution of sinitic Ch'an ideology in China and Korea, as a means of determining the possible authorship of the scripture.

In part 2, I present a complete, annotated translation of the *Vajrasamādhi*, the first in a Western language. My translation is heavily indebted to Wŏnhyo's interpretations of the often-problematic literary Chinese of the *Vajrasamādhi*. His comments and glosses are either translated or paraphrased in the annotation or included in brackets in the main body of the translation. Though Wŏnhyo's interpretations are occasionally forced, they tell us much about how a Silla Buddhist who was a contemporary of the *Vajrasamādhi*'s author understood the text. While a complete translation of Wŏnhyo's commentary to the sūtra may also have been desirable, its length made it impractical for this book. Still, much that is of philosophical or philological interest in Wŏnhyo's commentary is brought out. What I have consistently omitted is the complex hermeneutical schema Wŏnhyo creates to explicate the text. While East Asian commentarial style demands the use of such an interpretive superstructure, it holds considerably less interest for the contemporary reader.

I also refer occasionally in the annotation to Chu-chen's Ch'ing dynasty commentary on the sūtra, which is an insightful and often provocative exegesis; I would have drawn from it much more extensively were it not for the late date of its composition. Yüan-ch'eng's seventeenth-century commentary is considerably less useful, and I have mentioned it only rarely.

As far as translation style is concerned, I have tried to maintain close fidelity to the Chinese text, without being rigidly literal in the process—no easy task, as any translator can attest. There are a few places where the Chinese of the text itself is either corrupt or stylistically impaired, and my

translation is occasionally tentative. The more problematic of these passages are noted in the annotation.

From the way in which the study evolved, it should be clear that I do not intend to propose in this book a general methodology by which to evaluate the authenticity of Sinitic Buddhist sūtras. However, the approach I follow in resolving the problems surrounding the origins of the *Vajrasamādhi* exemplifies techniques that may be of help in ferreting out other possible “apocryphal” scriptures. This approach will also illustrate the crossfertilization that I believe must occur between Buddhist studies and other of the humanistic disciplines of Sinology and Koreanology. We are at the stage in the development of Buddhist studies where the text-critical methodologies of the traditionally trained Buddhologist alone are no longer adequate to treat the questions the scholar of the indigenous Buddhist traditions of East Asia must ask.

In addition to its other aims, I hope too that this study will contribute to opening Korean Buddhism to further scholarly inquiry, especially its manifold points of symbiosis with the Chinese tradition. Despite the plethora of materials available in Sino-Korean, which are readily accessible to all Sinologists or Buddhologists who read literary Chinese, Korean Buddhism remains shamefully neglected in both Western and Japanese scholarship. It will give particular satisfaction to me if this book helps in its own small way to mitigate that neglect.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of my academic advisers at the University of California, Berkeley, for their guidance, support, and fellowship during the course of my undergraduate and graduate studies there. In particular I am grateful to Lewis Lancaster, Michel Strickmann, and Michael Rogers, my three readers on the dissertation to which this book owes its own origins. I will be satisfied if my work but partially emulates the superb model of scholarship that they have each provided. Several people have also read portions of the manuscript and offered valuable comments and suggestions, including Bernard Faure, Han Kidu, Ko Ikchin, Daniel Overmyer, and Henrik Sorensen. I am especially indebted to the Press’s two readers, John McRae and Peter Gregory, as well as to John Jorgensen, each of whom went through the manuscript with great care and offered judicious input on a number of key points. Karen Brock helped me to procure plates of the Japanese scroll that illustrates these pages. Kōzanji, which owns the scroll, kindly gave permission to reprint sections of the scroll, with plates provided from Kyoto National Museum. There are few instances in which Buddhist scholars can find relevant illustrative material for their research.

Considering my advocacy of an East Asian tradition of Buddhism, I was pleased to find illustrated in a Japanese scroll this Chinese legend about the origins of a Korean scripture. Several graduate students at UCLA have served as my research assistants over the last two years and have helped much in getting this book to press; especially deserving of mention are Chihwah Chan, Ding-hwa Hsieh, Sarah Lubman, Adam Schorr, and Daniel Altschuler, who prepared the index. Finally, I would like to thank my colleagues in the Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures at UCLA, who offered me a nonteaching quarter so that I could finish the research and writing of the book. I of course take full responsibility for any errors of fact or interpretation that may remain.

Research on this book was sponsored by the Joint Committee on Korean Studies of the American Council of Learned Societies and the Social Science Research Council, with funds provided by the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Ford Foundation. Funds for research assistantships were provided by the Committee on Research of the UCLA Academic Senate. The assistance of both these agencies is gratefully acknowledged.

Finally, I would like to thank my wife, Kyoko Tokuno, who does triple duty as my closest friend and colleague. The dedication of this book to her is but a small token of my debt of gratitude for her inspiration, learning, and support.

ABBREVIATIONS AND CONVENTIONS

Ch.	Chinese
<i>ch.</i>	<i>chüan</i>
IBK	<i>Indogaku bukkyōgaku kenkyū</i>
<i>k.</i>	<i>kwōn</i>
Ko Ikchin	“Wōnhyo ūi sasang ūi silch’ōn wōlli”
Kor.	Korean
KSGR	<i>Kūmgang sammaegyōng-ron</i>
Lieenthal	“Notes on the ‘Vajrasamādhi’ ”
Mizuno	“Bodaidaruma no Ninyūshigyōsetsu to Kongōzammaikyō”
McRae	<i>The Northern School and the Formation of Early Ch’an Buddhism</i>
PGHP	<i>Pulgyo hakpo</i>
SGYS	<i>Samguk yusa</i>
SKSC	<i>Sung Kao-seng chuan</i>
<i>T</i>	<i>Taishō shinshū daizōkyō</i>
<i>VS</i>	<i>Vajrasamādhi-sūtra</i>
<i>ZZ</i>	<i>Dai-Nihon zokuzōkyō</i>

Citations from the *Taishō* canon are listed in the following fashion: title (with Sanskrit title, if relevant, in parentheses) and fascicle number; *T*[*aishō*]; *Taishō* serial number; *Taishō* volume number; page, register (a, b, or c), line number(s). E.g., *Ta-fang-kuang fō hua-yen ching (Avatamsaka-sūtra)* 23, *T* 278.9.542c27–543a1.

Citations from the *Zokuzōkyō* are listed as follows: Title and fascicle number; *ZZ*; series; case; volume; page, column (a, b, c, or d), line number(s). E.g., *Shih-men Hung Chüeh-fan lin-chien lu* 1, *ZZ* 2b, 21, 4, 303d13.

Transliterations of Asian languages follow the systems commonly used in the scholarly community: Wade-Giles for Chinese, revised Hepburn for Japanese, McCune-Reischauer for Korean. I have adopted many of the modifications and enhancements of the McCune-Reischauer romanization proposed in Robert Austerlitz et al., “Report of the Workshop Conference on Korean Romanization.” I have also adapted their recommendation concern-

ing the treatment of quasi-free Sino-Korean suffixes and category designates (e.g., I write *Kūmgang sammaegyōng-ron*, not *Kūmgang sammae kyōng non*).

All Buddhist terminology that appears in *Webster's Third New International Dictionary* I regard as English and leave unitalicized: this includes such technical terms as *dhāraṇī*, *dhyāna*, *skandha*, and *tathāgatagarbha*. For a convenient listing of a hundred such words, see Roger Jackson, "Terms of Sanskrit and Pali Origin Acceptable as English Words." I have, however, expanded the list to include compounds formed from accepted words, for example, *vajrasamādhi* and *tathāgatadhyāna*. I also romanize *ālayavijñāna* and *amalavijñāna*, because of their frequent appearance in this book.

Since I consider the *Vajrasamādhi-sūtra* to be a Korean composition, I transliterate the indigenous technical terminology of East Asian Buddhism according to the Korean pronunciation of the literary Chinese, followed by the Chinese, where relevant: for example, *pon'gak/pen-chüeh*, *haengnip/hsing-ju*. Standard, pan-Buddhistic terms (e.g., *kleśa*, *saṃyojana*) are cited only in Sanskrit.

In rendering Buddhist technical terms, where the Chinese is a translation, I translate; where it is a transcription, I transcribe. Thus, whenever a term is italicized (e.g., *kṣāntipāramitā*), the Chinese has been a transcription. The only exception is technical terminology that has now entered the English language (e.g., *skandha*); such terms typically are translated in the Chinese.

Since my own reading of the *Vajrasamādhi* relies heavily on Wōnhyo's commentary, in translating the *sūtra* I have followed the recension of the *Vajrasamādhi* embedded there, unless otherwise noted. I also often follow Wōnhyo's interpretations because I believe he and his coterie were the prime target audience of the *sūtra*'s author. For ease in consulting the Chinese text of the *sūtra*, however, page and column references bracketed in the body of the translation are keyed to the *Taishō* edition of the *Vajrasamādhi* (*T* 273). In the annotation, I refer to my translation of the *Vajrasamādhi* appearing in part 2 by chapter and note number (e.g., *VS*, chap. 5, at n. 74).

Part One

Study

CHAPTER ONE

THE *VAJRASAMĀDHI-SŪTRA* AS AN APOCRYPHAL SCRIPTURE

This book is the story of a Buddhist scripture, the *Vajrasamādhī-sūtra*, or *Book of Adamantine Absorption*.¹ Until the middle of this century, this scripture was thought to be a translation into Chinese of an Indian Buddhist text, made some three centuries after Buddhism's introduction into China. Modern scholars have raised questions about this assumption, some proposing that the text may actually have been written in China—that is, be “apocryphal.” The story I seek to tell here, though, will take us in rather a different direction, not just to China but also to Korea. And its plot will not be limited to issues of scriptural authenticity but will also involve the origins of one of the foremost branches of East Asian Buddhism: the school of Ch'an or, as it is usually known in the West, Zen.

¹ *Chin-kang san-mei ching*; Korean *Kūmgang sammae-kyōng*; Jpn. *Kongōzammaikyō*; *T* 273.9.365c-374b; hereafter abbreviated in the notes as *VS* and cited only by page, register, and line. Several undated Tun-huang fragments of *VS* are also extant: Stein nos. 2368, 2445, 2610, 2794 (the only complete MS.), 3615; and Peking nos. Huang 93 and Yu 81. The Tibetan recension (Tib *Rdo-rje'hi tin-ne-hḍsin-gyi chos-kyi yi-ge*), which is translated from Chinese, is no. 803 in the Peking collection, no. 135 in the *Tōhoku* catalogue, and also available in two Tun-huang MSS (Pelliot nos. 623 and 116). The Tibetan translation was probably made sometime between the late eighth and early ninth centuries, since *VS* is listed in the Lden-kar scriptural catalogue, which Yoshimura Shūki dates to ca. 824 (“The Denkar-Ma, An Oldest Catalogue of the Tibetan Buddhist Canons,” pp. 113–14). For a survey of *VS* manuscripts, see Okabe Kazuo, “Zensō no chūsho to gigi kyōten,” pp. 360–61.

Lionel Giles (*A Descriptive Catalogue of the Chinese Manuscripts from Tunhuang in the British Museum*, p. 176, entry no. 5726) has suggested that Stein no. 2368, which includes a fragment of *VS* on the verso side, is written in a “somewhat later hand” than the recto copy of *Ssu-fen chieh-pen su*, which he considers to be a “fairly good MS. of 6th cent.” In fact, these fragments were copied at least some one hundred years after the recto text, given that they contain a passage taken from Hsüan-tsang's 649 translation of the *Heart Sūtra* (*Po-jo po-lo-mi hsin ching*, *T* 251.8.848c = *VS*, chap. 6, at n. 95). Techniques for dating the Tun-huang manuscripts have been developed by Fujieda Akira; for a summary of his methodology, see his “The Tun-huang Manuscripts,” pp. 121–23.

Problems and Prospects of Studying the *Vajrasamādhi-Sūtra**The Symbiotic Relationship between Chinese and Korean Buddhism*

Given the dominance the Chinese exerted over the political and cultural life of East Asia throughout most of history, it is easy to forget that Koreans are a distinct race with a unique language, culture, and society, as different from the Chinese and Japanese as the French are from Germans or Italians. The close relationships between China and the Korean peninsula since the inception of the common era brought Korea inextricably within the web of sinic civilization. The coalescence of the tribal leagues of prehistoric Korea into the three kingdoms of Koguryō, Paekche, and Silla occurred simultaneous with the gradual infiltration of Chinese culture from the mainland. This infiltration was speeded through the missionary activities of the Buddhists, who brought not only their religious teachings and rituals but also Chinese secular culture to new regions of Asia. To a considerable extent it was Buddhism, with its large body of written scriptures, that fostered among the Koreans literacy in written Chinese, the lingua franca of educated discourse in East Asia. Knowledge of Chinese logographs was indispensable in order to have access to the written scriptures of Mahāyāna Buddhism. But full literacy in the commentarial and exegetical materials of Chinese Buddhism demanded familiarity as well with the full range of Chinese secular writing, including Confucian philosophy and ritual, belles lettres, calendrics, and divination. It was perhaps inevitable, then, that the diffusion of Buddhism occurred in tandem with expanding fluency in the Chinese writing system.² Buddhism thus played a crucial role in the evolution of Sino-Korean civilization. Eventually much of Korea's indigenous culture was eclipsed (though never fully subsumed) by the incoming sinic civilization and this alien religion of Buddhism. The challenge Buddhism presented to the domestic worldview, and its co-option of autochthonous myth to justify its naturalization in Korea, will be one of the backdrops against which is played out this story of the *Vajrasamādhi*.

Despite their apparent geographical isolation from the major scholastic and practice centers of Buddhism in China, Korean adherents of the religion maintained close contacts with their brethren on the mainland. Korea's

² For an insightful discussion of the Buddhist role in transmitting sinic culture in general to the rest of East Asia, see Inoue Hideo, "Chōsen ni okeru bukkuyō juyō to shinkan'nen," pp. 45–52. I have made an annotated translation of this article in "The Reception of Buddhism in Korea and Its Impact on Indigenous Culture."

proximity to North China via the overland route through Manchuria assured the establishment of diplomatic and cultural ties between the peninsula and the mainland. But during its Three Kingdoms (first century A.D.–668) and Unified Silla (669–936) periods, Korea was the veritable Phoenicia of East Asia, and its nautical prowess and well-developed sea lanes made the peninsula's seaports the hubs of regional commerce. It was thus relatively easy for Korean monks to accompany trading parties to China, where they could learn from, and train together with, Chinese adepts. Ennin (793–864), a Japanese pilgrim in China during the middle of the ninth century, reported on the large Korean contingent among the foreign monks in the Chinese capital of Ch'ang-an. All along China's eastern littoral were permanent communities of Koreans, which were granted extraterritorial privileges and had their own autonomous political administration. Temples were established in those communities, which served as centers for the many Korean monks and traders operating in China.³

Although most Korean pilgrims eventually returned to their homeland, several remained behind in China and became prominent leaders of T'ang dynasty Buddhist schools. The Koguryō monk Sūngnang (Ch. Seng-lang; fl. ca. 490), for instance, was an important vaunt courier in the San-lun school, the Chinese counterpart of the Madhyamaka branch of Indian philosophical exegesis. Wōnch'ūk (Ch. Yüan-tse; 613–696) in the Fa-hsiang (Yogācāra) school was one of the two main disciples of the preeminent Chinese pilgrim-translator Hsüan-tsang (d. 664). Still today, Wōnch'ūk remains well known to Tibetans through his renowned commentary to the *Samādhinirmocana-sūtra*, which was extremely influential in the evolution of Tibetan Buddhism. Later, during the Sung dynasty, Ch'egwan (Ch. Ti-kuan; d. 971) revived a moribund Chinese T'ien-t'ai school and wrote the definitive treatise on its doctrinal taxonomy, the *T'ien-t'ai ssu-chiao i* (An outline of the fourfold teachings).⁴

This ready interchange between Korea and China allowed indigenous Korean contributions to Buddhist thought to become known to the Chinese as well. Writings produced in either of the two regions were often transmitted to the other with relative dispatch, so that scholars in both traditions were kept well apprised of advances made by their colleagues. Thus doc-

³ See Edwin O. Reischauer, *Ennin's Travels in T'ang China*, especially chap. 8, "The Koreans in China." For a survey of Buddhist monastic life in such a Korean colony, see Henrik Sorensen, "Ennin's Account of a Korean Buddhist Monastery, 839–840 A.D.," pp. 141–55.

⁴ I emphasize the need to take into account these Korean contributions to Chinese Buddhism in my article "Buddhism in Korea," pp. 421–26.

trinal treatises and scriptural commentaries written in Silla Korea by such monks as Ŭisang (625–702) and Wŏnhyo (617–686) were much admired in China, and their insights heavily influenced, for example, the thought of Fa-tsang (643–712), the systematizer of the Chinese Hua-yen school. And so it was with Fa-tsang’s works in Korea. Wŏnhyo, in particular, will be a central figure in this investigation of the origins of the *Vajrasamādhi*. The legends told about the events leading up to his authorship of *Kūmgang sammaegyōng-ron* (hereafter *KSGR*),⁵ the earliest commentary to the *Vajrasamādhi*, will prove vital in ascertaining the scripture’s provenance, dating, and doctrinal approach.

New Approaches to the Origins of Ch’an

Such contacts between Chinese and Korean Buddhism are especially pronounced in the case of Ch’an—known in Korea as Sŏn. Two of the earliest “schools” of Ch’an—if one can call “schools” the small coteries of students gathered around isolated teachers during this period of incipency⁶—were

⁵ *Kūmgang sammaegyōng-ron*, T 1730.34.961a–1008a (hereafter abbreviated as *KSGR* and cited only by page, register, and line). Korean vernacular translations appear in Rhi Ki-yong [Yi Kiyōng], trans., *Han’guk ūi Pulgyo sasang*, pp. 138–240; Rhi Ki-yong, trans., *Kūmgang sammaegyōng-ron*; Sŏng Nakhun, trans., *Wŏnhyo, Wŏnch’ŭk, Ŭisang, Hyech’o, Ch’egwan, Ŭich’ŏn*, pp. 133–281; and most recently Kim Talchin, trans., *Kūmgang sammaegyōng-ron*. See also the studies mentioned *infra* by Ko Ikchin and Han Kidu. In addition to Wŏnhyo’s work, another Korean commentary to *VS* is mentioned by Ŭich’ŏn (1055–1101) in his bibliographical catalogue, *Sinp’yŏn chejong kyojang ch’ongnok* 1, T 2184 55.1171b11. This text, the *Kūmgang sammaegyōng-chu*, is attributed to Tullyun (alt., Toryun, Sūngdun; d.u.), a Silla monk about whom little is known. Eighteen works are attributed to him, of which only one is extant; see listings in Tongguk taehakkyo Pulgyo munhwa yŏn’guso, ed., *Han’guk Pulgyo ch’ansul munhŏn ch’ongnok*, pp. 67–69. Tullyun’s commentary is quoted in the section on amalavijñāna in *Fan-i ming-i chi* 6, T 2131.54.1158b–c, suggesting that the text remained in circulation at least through 1143. Chu-chen mentions this citation of Tullyun’s commentary and says that he was in the Fa-yen lineage of Ch’an, which is impossible; *Chin-kang san-mei ching t’ung-tsung chi* 1, ZZ 1, 55, 3, 228a3; hereafter cited only by page and register. Four nonextant, anonymous commentaries to *VS*, apparently by Japanese authors, are listed in the 1094 Japanese catalogue, *Tōiki dentō mokuroku*; see T 2183.55.1152a27 (*Kongōzammaikyō ronso*); 1152a28 (*Kongōzammaikyōgō*); 1152a29 (*Kongōzammaikyō shiki*); 1152b1 (*Kongōzammaikyō shiji*). These are listed in my article “Did Wŏnhyo Write Two Versions of His *Kūmgang sammaegyōng-ron* [Exposition of the *Book of Adamantine Absorption*]?: An Issue in Korean Buddhist Textual History.”

⁶ See Stanley Weinstein’s admonition about using “school” to translate the Chinese *tsung* in his article “Chinese Buddhism,” pp. 482–87; McRae (“The Ox-Head School of Chinese Ch’an Buddhism: From Early Ch’an to the Golden Age,” p. 199) also warns that these early factions of Ch’an were not schools “in any organizational or institutional sense. . . . [Instead, they] represented a religious ideal with which one might empathize, a loose sense of fellowship rather than a precisely defined clique.”

the Ching-chung and Pao-t'ang, centered in what was then the wild Szechwan frontier of southwestern China. Both factions claimed as their patriarch a Ch'an master of Korean extraction named Musang (Ch. Wu-hsiang; 680/4–762), who is better known as Reverend Kim (Kim *hwasang*), using his native Korean surname.⁷ While this tale of the *Vajrasamādhi* will deal only tangentially with Musang, one of its major subplots will concern the intimate connections between Korea and China during the early evolution of the Ch'an tradition. Indeed, the Ch'an components that can be isolated in the *Vajrasamādhi* will provide compelling clues as to its authorship and the motives underlying its composition.

Ch'an has traditionally prided itself on being a transmission of Buddhism that was separate from the doctrinal teachings of the religion. Ch'an claimed that its dissemination occurred through direct spiritual experience, not the indirect medium of the spoken or written word. To justify this distinctive view of itself, Ch'an created an elaborate pseudohistory tracing its spiritual lineage back to the Buddha himself. This history was populated with legendary patriarchs in India and China who transmitted the Buddha's enlightenment down through the ages, followed by successive generations of eminent masters throughout East Asia who formalized Ch'an teaching styles into a variety of different schools or "houses" (*chia*). All these men were then knit together in systematic, lineal fashion by intricate primary and collateral lineages. While the historical origins of Ch'an are still a matter of considerable scholarly debate, Ch'an's diachronic portrayal of its own history is now all but totally debunked. The lives of the patriarchs are shrouded in obscurity, and the connections between the successive generations of its teachers are often tenuous at best, if not patently contrived. As retrospective views of how the mature Ch'an schools perceived their own evolution, these accounts are invaluable; but as reliable historical sources for ascertaining the earliest filiations of the nascent Ch'an tradition, they are most unsatisfactory.

⁷ For Musang, see Jan Yün-hua, "Tung-hai ta-shih Wu-hsiang chuan yen-chiu," pp. 47–60; Yamaguchi Zuihō, "Chibetto bukkyō to Shiragi Kin oshō," pp. 1–36; Broughton, "Early Ch'an Schools in Tibet," pp. 1–68 passim, who points out that there were no lineal connections between the Ching-chung school of Musang and the Pao-t'ang school of his presumed successor, Wu-chu (714–74); and Yanagida, "Li-tai fa-pao chi," p. 18. For further sources on his life and thought, see Buswell, *The Korean Approach to Zen: The Collected Works of Chinul*, p. 77 n. 51. Obata Hironobu, "Chibetto no Zenshū to *Rekidai hōbōki*," pp. 139–76, has noted that it is probably because of its associations with the Pao-t'ang school of early Ch'an that *VS* came to be translated into Tibetan. See the summary of the article in Ueyama Daishun, "The Study of Tibetan Ch'an Manuscripts Recovered from Tun-huang: A Review of the Field and Its Prospects," pp. 332–33.

The present approach to determining the origins of Ch'an must take a different, more synchronic, tack.⁸

An innovative approach to describing early Ch'an teachings has been made by John McRae in his recent book on the Northern school (Pei tsung). Rather than treating Ch'an in terms of its traditional lineages—what he terms a “string of pearls” approach—McRae seeks instead to examine early Ch'an teachings as elaborations of two metaphors: a more static image of the luminous sun adventitiously covered by passing clouds, and a more active metaphor of a mirror reflecting everything universally. These metaphors are then interpreted as the conceptual matrices within which much of early Ch'an doctrine is expressed.⁹ If accepted, McRae's account makes obsolete many of the older rubrics with which early Ch'an doctrine has been analyzed—particularly the sudden/gradual dichotomy that has dominated most Ch'an scholarship to date. Such a focus on metaphor would also seem to be particularly promising for analyzing the literature of the mature Ch'an tradition—especially the massive anecdotal collections, with their rich, if sometimes stultifying, imagery.

The *Vajrasamādhi* provides a different perspective on developing such a thematic approach. Rather than forcing us to interpret the imagery of explicitly Ch'an texts, this sūtra allows us instead to look at the doctrinal context within which Ch'an elements are placed in apocryphal sūtras oriented toward Ch'an, such as the text under consideration here. The *Vajrasamādhi* contains extensive references to many of the major trends occurring in contemporary Buddhist exegesis. But the ways in which such trends were made to relate to Ch'an ideas provide an invaluable guide for evaluating the doctrinal affinities and intellectual confluences of the Ch'an movement. The *Vajrasamādhi* will show first and foremost that the teachings of Ch'an must be viewed as part and parcel of the mainstream of sinic Buddhist doc-

⁸ A compelling indictment of this “string of pearls” approach to the study of Ch'an is found in John R. McRae, *The Northern School and the Formation of Early Ch'an Buddhism*, esp. pp. 7–8. See also his comments on p. 120 concerning the need for a synchronic approach to studying the teachings of early Ch'an.

⁹ The sun-and-cloud metaphor McRae (esp. pp. 146–47, 246–50) equates with the East Mountain meditative approach of “guarding the mind,” as well as with the “access of principle” found in the *Erh-ju ssu-hsing lun* of Bodhidharma. He sees the mirror metaphor conducing to a more dynamic gnoseology, in which the interactions occurring in ordinary life are themselves enlightenment. This second metaphor is adumbrated in the Bodhidharma text's access of practice and provides the principal focus of Northern school soteriology. The use of imagery in buddhological research has also been explored with considerable success by Steven Collins in his recent book on the meaning of “non-self” (*anattā*) doctrine in the Pali Buddhist tradition; see his *Selfless Persons: Imagery and Thought in Theravāda Buddhism*.

trine—whatever the school’s persistent protestations to the contrary. The relationship the author draws between Ch’an praxis and the seminal doctrinal concepts of the wider sinitic tradition will show that, while Ch’an may “not,” as it claims, “rely on words and letters,” it nevertheless has drawn creatively, and with little real reticence, on the scriptural teachings of the larger Buddhist tradition.

The *Vajrasamādhi* dates from the incipency of Ch’an, when its earliest clearly historical factions were forming and the school’s adepts were showing their first concerns with their own “sectarian” identity. In the period between the last half of the seventh century and the early years of the eighth, a class of monks appeared who began to view themselves as having a distinctive pedigree, unique within Chinese Buddhism. These monks presumed themselves heirs to a lineage that could be traced back to an Indian patriarch, Bodhidharma (P’u-t’i ta-mo; d. ca. 530?),¹⁰ whom they claimed had introduced a new type of Buddhism to China. It is these monks whom I shall identify as belonging to the “Ch’an school,” to distinguish them from other Chinese adepts who also practiced *ch’an*, or meditation.¹¹ The *Vajrasamādhi* includes references to teachings that derive from two distinct factions of these early Ch’an adepts: the “two accesses” soteriology attributed to this putative first Chinese patriarch of Ch’an, Bodhidharma; and the “guarding the one”/“guarding the mind” meditative theory of the traditional fourth and fifth patriarchs, Tao-hsin (580–651) and Hung-jen (601–674). However, these teachings appear not in an explicitly Ch’an text, but instead in the guise of a sūtra, a sermon attributed to the Buddha himself, which provides the basis for the doctrinal teachings of Buddhism. This sūtra draws heavily from Tathāgatagarbha (lit., “womb” or “embryo” of buddhahood) thought, a strand of Buddhist philosophy based on the universal immanence of enlightenment. The doctrines presented in the *Vajrasamādhi* that contextualize these Ch’an teachings may not in themselves offer precise information about the historical evolution of Ch’an. Nevertheless, they do give important indications concerning the philosophical sensitivities and religious interests of the early Ch’an adepts who probably wrote the sūtra. Despite Ch’an’s own vision of its independence from the rest of the Bud-

¹⁰ This dating is suggested by McRae, p. 18. Bodhidharma’s dates are given variously as ?–495; ?–436; 346–495; and ?–528 in Zengaku Daijiten Hensansho, ed., *Zengaku daijiten*, s.v. “Bodaidaruma.”

¹¹ Here I follow Griffith Foulk’s critique of previous scholarly attempts to define the Ch’an school and his convincing argument for a more “stipulative” definition; see his recent dissertation “The ‘Ch’an School’ and Its Place in the Buddhist Monastic Tradition,” pp. 164–244.

dhist tradition, this book will show that it in fact evolves out of an attempt to elaborate the praxis aspects of Tathāgatagarbha thought.

The *Vajrasamādhi* plays an important role too in expanding the scope of *ch'an* ("meditation") to take in the highest reaches of Mahāyāna Buddhist spiritual experience: the nonproduction of all dharmas (*anutpattikadharma-kṣānti*). In so doing, *ch'an* was freed from the purely contemplative role it played in earlier Indian and Chinese Buddhism so that, as Ch'an, it could become a complete religious and ideological system.¹² Inspired by the Tathāgatagarbha ideal and motivated by the aspiration to make enlightenment accessible to all, Ch'an was thus part of the trend that was strong during the fifth through eighth centuries to "sinicize" Buddhism—that is, to assimilate the imported Indian tradition with indigenous religious needs, cultural expectations, and social mores. Ch'an's conjunctions with its native counterparts in Chinese Buddhism are much more compelling than its alleged disjunctions. These commonalities Ch'an strove to gainsay with elaborate legends of ancient masters and complex lineages proving the independence of its transmission. This is not to deny that Ch'an was a distinctive school of Chinese Buddhism by the Sung dynasty, but its uniqueness derives not so much from its religious doctrines as its unusual rhetorical styles, pedagogical techniques, and meditative practices.¹³ The *Vajrasamādhi* will reveal that the philosophical underpinnings of these distinctive Ch'an features are remarkably similar to those of other, more explicitly "doctrinal" schools of the indigenous sinitic traditions of Buddhism.

As a text with an implicit Ch'an agenda, but without an explicit Ch'an pedigree, the *Vajrasamādhi* is in a unique position to corroborate teachings that later Ch'an doxographic works attribute to earlier patriarchs. This sūtra will emerge as one of the oldest works affiliated with Ch'an, apparently antedated only by a treatise attributed to Bodhidharma, the *Erh-ju ssu-hsing lun* (Treatise on the two accesses and four practices), the basic outlines of which are included in the *Vajrasamādhi*. And the *Vajrasamādhi* itself predates all of the sectarian doxographic anthologies of the Northern school, such as *Leng-ch'ieh shih-tzu chi* (Records of the masters and disciples of the *Lankā[vatāra]*), which heretofore were the only sources of information on the early East Mountain school (Tung-shan fa-men) of Tao-hsin and Hung-jen. The *Vajra-*

¹² See discussion in part 1, chapter 4, "Guarding the One' and Early Ch'an Meditation." This point is made also by Foulk, "The 'Ch'an School,'" pp. 117–18.

¹³ For discussion on this point, see my article "The 'Short-Cut' Approach of *K'an-hua* Meditation: The Evolution of a Practical Subitism in Chinese Ch'an Buddhism," esp. pp. 321–27. As I mention there, I believe the Sung period was the "Golden Age" of Ch'an

samādhi in fact provides the only independent corroboration of these later accounts of the East Mountain teachings. The structure of the section in the *Vajrasamādhi* that includes these early Ch'an components also reveals its author's bias in favor of the East Mountain faction and lends credence to the claim I will make here that this sūtra was written by a Ch'an author, specifically a Korean associated with that school. But in its synthesis of these teachings, the *Vajrasamādhi* is implicitly connecting the East Mountain faction to Bodhidharma, suggesting in the process the lineality of the Ch'an transmission. This lineality will be crucial in the evolution of an independent self-identity for the Ch'an school.

The *Vajrasamādhi* is even more important for our knowledge of early Sōn in Korea. The so-called Nine Mountain Gates of Sōn (Kusan Sōnmun) are presumed to have evolved during the last century of the Unified Silla dynasty, and all but two of those schools derive from Chinese Ch'an teachers associated with the Hung-chou school of the middle Ch'an period.¹⁴ The oldest of these nine, the Hūiyang-san school, traces its origins to an indigenous Sōn lineage that began with Tao-hsin in China, as combined with a Chinese Northern school transmission. But the few extant sources that discuss the foundation of the Nine Mountains schools all date from the ninth century, fully two centuries after the *Vajrasamādhi*. If my scenario of the Korean Sōn authorship of this sūtra is accepted, it will be the first evidence of the type of Sōn that was practiced on the peninsula at the school's inception. And that proto-Sōn will derive not from the "Southern school" of the Sixth Patriarch, Hui-neng (638–713), as most Korean exponents have heretofore claimed, but from the East Mountain school.

Despite Ch'an's later preeminence in the mature East Asian traditions of Buddhism, it did not always find a receptive audience for its new message. This it often had to earn through pitched debates with its rivals, if not blatant propaganda. The process of disseminating a religious ideology into new regions, and thence establishing an independent sectarian identity for itself, will be one of the major themes of this book. A religion such as Mahāyāna Buddhism, with its expansive worldview, elaborate doctrinal systems, complex spiritual practices, and methodical ritual life, might easily arouse the curiosity of potential converts. But sustaining that interest was a far more

¹⁴ Only the last of the schools to form, the Sumi-san school, claims a different lineage—through Ch'ing-yüan Hsing-ssu (d. 740), in what would become the Ts'ao-t'ung line. For the Nine Mountains schools, see part 1, chap. 4, "Early Korean Sōn and the Legend of Pōm-nang." For my tripartite periodization of Ch'an into early, middle, and classical periods, see my article, "The 'Short-Cut' Approach of *K'an-Hua* Meditation," pp. 327–28.

difficult undertaking—difficult, but vital, if the religion was to flourish in the targeted region.

Silla was the last of the three kingdoms of ancient Korea to form and, in turn, the last to adopt sinitic culture, including Buddhism. Its isolated geographical position in the far southeast of the Korean peninsula kept Silla from becoming part of the formal tributary system that governed relations between the Chinese empire and its peripheral regions until the middle of the sixth century. Silla thus did not receive any direct transmission of Buddhism from the Chinese court until 549, almost two centuries after Koguryō and Paekche. But Buddhism seems to have been filtering into Silla from Koguryō at the local level by the middle of the fifth century, in tandem with important political changes occurring in the kingdom. At that time, Silla was evolving from a tribal confederation into a hereditary monarchy. This process culminated in the creation of a sinicized state during the reign of King Pōphŭng (r. 514–539), which put in place a centralized bureaucracy modeled after Chinese political institutions.

But a unifying ideology was crucial to the successful completion of this process of state formation and, especially, to justify the concentration of power in the monarchy. Some texts of Mahāyāna Buddhism, such as the *Jen-wang ching* (Book of benevolent kings), which will figure in the story of the recovery of the *Vajrasamādhi*, and the *Chin-kuang-ming ching* (Sūtra of golden light), provided ideological justification for allegiance to the king, helping to loosen persistent tribal and clan ties. Such political exigencies may have contributed to Pōphŭng’s decision to force the aristocracy to recognize Buddhism as the official state religion. Though the nobility resisted the move, they were eventually won over, according to legend, by the martyrdom of one of their fellow vassals, the grand secretary Ich’adon (d.u.), in 529. Subsequent kings lent vigorous support to the adopted religion, constructing monasteries, sponsoring Buddhist ceremonies, and even becoming monks themselves. Pōphŭng’s successor, Chinhŭng (r. 540–575), brought the aristocracy into this politico-religious nexus by forming the *hwarang* (lit., “flower boys”), a military and religious organization of noble youths trained according to Buddhist principles, charging it with responsibility for the moral and military protection of the nation. As the drive for peninsular unification intensified, Silla support for Buddhism became ever stronger. It is no surprise, then, that in the years leading up to the 669 unification of the Korean peninsula under the Silla banner, there was a massive flowering of Buddhist scholastic studies in Korea, which produced advancements in

Buddhist philosophy rivaling anything then found on the Chinese mainland.¹⁵

The doctrinal teachings that came to be supported in Silla were those that helped to justify at an ideological level a centralized bureaucracy reporting to an autocratic monarch. It was the Hwaŏm school in particular that reaped the benefits of such political interests. Its doctrine of “consummate interfusion” (*wŏnyung/yüan-jung*)—in which, as the Korean Hwaŏm founder Ŭisang (625–702) says, “in one is all and in the many is one; one is all and the many are one”—was ideally suited to such a system of statecraft.¹⁶ In return for its ideological sanction of the Silla monarchy, Hwaŏm received munificent official support and established a nexus of state-sponsored monasteries throughout the realm. The first of these Hwaŏm monasteries, Pusŏk-sa, was built in 676, at the very time, I propose, the *Vajrasamādhi* was written.

Now fully committed to Buddhism, the Silla state and the Buddhist religion became intricately intertwined, the state supplying munificent material donations and extensive political support to the religion, the religion interceding with the powerful deities and bodhisattvas of Buddhism on behalf of the state and its welfare. The political investment of the court in the status quo—especially the Hwaŏm school—would make it extremely difficult for rival interpretations of Buddhism even to be heard, let alone disseminated. Imagine, then, the problems that would have faced Sŏn missionaries expounding a new and reputedly superior form of Buddhism, which claimed not to be beholden to the scriptures that the other Buddhist schools of the peninsula followed. Sŏn’s impudence was a gauntlet that challenged not only the authority of the entrenched scholastic schools, but the spiritual foundations of the nation. How could these first Sŏn adepts hope to convince Koreans, especially those holding positions of ecclesiastical and polit-

¹⁵ Perhaps the best treatment of the close connections between Buddhism and the state in ancient Korea appears in Ko Ikchun, “Han’guk kodae ũi Pulgyo sasang,” pp. 11–106. For accessible treatments of the role of Buddhism in state formation in Three Kingdoms Korea, see An Kye-Hyŏn, “Silla Buddhism and the Spirit of the Protection of the Fatherland,” pp. 27–29; Hee Sung Keel, “Buddhism and Political Power in Korean History,” esp. pp. 12–16; Tamura Enchō, “Japan and the Eastward Permeation of Buddhism,” pp. 10–12. For the *hwarang* system see Richard Rutt, “The Flower Boys of Silla (Hwarang),” pp. 1–66. The legend of Ich’adon appears in the biography of Pŏpkong in *Haedong kosŭng-chŏn* (T 2065.50.1018c–1019a); see Peter H. Lee, trans., *Lives of Eminent Korean Monks: The Haedong Kosŭng chŏn*, pp. 58–63. For an attempt at a general theory of the evolution of Buddhism and other missionary religions, which draws on Korean examples, see James Huntly Grayson, *Early Buddhism and Christianity in Korea: A Study in the Emplantation of Religion*.

¹⁶ See *Hwaŏm ilsŭng pŏpkye-to* (T 1887A.45.711a). For the importance of Hwaŏm Buddhism in Silla national ideology, see Ki-Baek Lee, *A New History of Korea*, p. 81.

ical power, that their form of Buddhism was truer to the Buddha's intent than were the sūtras themselves and their learned expositions in the doctrinal schools? In the story of the *Vajrasamādhi*, I will pay close attention to the artifices—such as scriptural composition—that the first Sōn missionaries might have employed to spread their new, and in some ways radical, message.

Apocryphal Texts and the Sinicization of Buddhism

I have referred already several times to the indigenous sūtras of East Asian Buddhism as “apocryphal” texts, what the Chinese cataloguers generally call *i-ching* (“books of doubtful authenticity”) or *wei-ching* (“spurious books”). In using such terms as “apocrypha” to refer to indigenous scriptures like the *Vajrasamādhi*, in no way do I mean to convey any such pejorative connotation. Etymologically, “apocrypha” refers to works that are “secret” or “hidden away,” either too profound or perhaps too dangerous for public circulation. Three principal usages of the term are noted in Occidental religious literature: laudatory, minatory, and pejorative.¹⁷ But the criteria employed in the Judeo-Christian tradition to distinguish between apocryphal and canonical are so inconsistent as to be virtually useless for the present purposes—especially so when one considers that Buddhism had no corpora of texts, like the biblical Apocrypha, that were distinct from the revealed teachings of the religion. These criteria hardly provide a worthy model for discussion of Buddhist texts in East Asia, where the principal standard of canonicity was, as will be seen, whether a sūtra was of “foreign,” that is, Indian or Central Asian, origin.

One must also remain on guard lest the use of such a term as “apocrypha” to refer exclusively to native scriptures imply a value judgment about the relative value of Indian versus sinitic materials that is inappropriate, if not utterly misleading, in the context of East Asian Buddhism. If scriptures are deemed “apocryphal” merely because they were written by native authors, then the vast majority of Indian—and especially Indian Mahāyāna—sūtras should be similarly labeled, since their redactions certainly postdate the Buddha's own lifetime. Admittedly, apocryphal texts did often try to “hide” their origins in order to better their chances of acceptance. But the use of such false attributions was not merely intended as subterfuge. There was in

¹⁷ For these three distinct connotations of the term “apocrypha,” see R. H. Charles, *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English*, vol. 1, p. viii.

fact a long tradition, deriving ultimately from India, of writing texts and attributing them to previous saints, out of respect for one's predecessors. Provided that the term is used with due diligence, one may appropriate "apocrypha" to refer to indigenous Buddhist scriptures, composed outside the Indian cultural sphere, which follow the narrative structure of Indian or Central Asian sūtras.¹⁸

The composition of apocryphal texts was part of the sinicization process by which the imported Indian and Central Asian traditions of Buddhism were adapted to indigenous East Asian culture. This process of assimilation took place in several phases. The first was for the Chinese to seek to understand the incoming tradition in terms of their own native intellectual and religious traditions.¹⁹ In the second, as more texts were made available in translation, and as the Chinese apprehension of Buddhism became increasingly sophisticated, exegetical schools began to develop that sought to interpret Buddhist texts on their own terms, free of much of the obscuring veil of indigenous philosophy. Careful study of these commentarial exegeses and doctrinal elaborations of originally Indian materials tell much about the Chinese understanding of Indian Buddhism and help to clarify problematic areas in Indian thought. In fact, one reason scholars of Buddhism first took an interest in Chinese sources was to gain access both to Indian texts that are no longer available in Sanskrit or Middle Indic and to indigenous commentaries that would help in interpreting those texts. But by limiting attention to exegeses of originally Indian materials, scholars ran the risk of treating the East Asian traditions of Buddhism as mere appendages of India.

A third phase, which more recently has received the lion's share of scholarly attention, was the creative response to Indian Buddhism, as seen especially in the evolution of uniquely sinitic schools of Buddhism, such as T'ien-t'ai, Hua-yen, and Ch'an.²⁰ Such schools sought to respond to issues raised in Indian Buddhist texts by interpreting and remolding them in light

¹⁸ I have discussed in more detail the problem of using "apocrypha" and alternate terms to refer to indigenous sūtras in my "Prolegomenon to the Study of Buddhist Apocryphal Literature," in Buswell, ed., *Chinese Buddhist Apocrypha*.

¹⁹ This phase of sinicization is brilliantly handled in Erik Zürcher's *The Buddhist Conquest of China*.

²⁰ The rise of such indigenous schools has been discussed in Stanley Weinstein's "Imperial Patronage in the Formation of T'ang Buddhism," pp. 265–306; and more recently in Robert Gimello's "Chih-yen (602–668) and the Foundations of Hua-yen Buddhism." Both of these studies are based on the pioneering work of Yūki Reimon. Valuable comments on the issue of sinicization appear in Robert Gimello, "Random Reflections on the 'Sinicization' of Buddhism," pp. 52–89.

of indigenous intellectual traditions and cultural mores. But there was still another way in which such assimilation could take place: not through forming a new learned school, but by composing a new sūtra—an “apocryphal” scripture. One of the most startling discoveries of East Asian Buddhist scholarship has been that many of the seminal texts of the Sinitic tradition were not translated sūtras at all, but such indigenous compositions. Apocryphal texts often satisfied East Asian religious presumptions and needs in ways that translated Indian scriptures, which targeted Indian or Central Asian audiences, simply could not. Like the indigenous learned schools of Buddhism, indigenous sūtras also sought to fashion East Asian forms of Buddhism, without precise analogues within the Indian tradition. In such scriptures, motifs and concepts drawn from translated texts were combined with beliefs and practices deriving from the native culture. These components were then arranged in a familiar sūtra narrative structure: the scripture is spoken by the Buddha at an Indian site, to an audience of Indians (or at least persons with pseudo-Indian names). In the *Vajrasamādhi*, these two strands of new scriptures and new learned movements converge.

But apocryphal texts were not mere passive reflections of developments taking place within the indigenous schools of Sinitic Buddhism; they often actively catalyzed or sustained those developments. Scriptural testimony was one of the principal standards of authority accepted in Buddhism, and doctrinal innovations could be justified if supported by citations from the sūtras. It was in scriptures that we now know to be apocryphal that such support was often found, thus accounting for their copious citation in the writings of East Asian scholiasts.²¹ As these texts were studied and quoted by eminent Buddhist exegetes, doubts about their provenance began to fade, until they were entered into the canon alongside translated scriptures. Thus many apocryphal sūtras eventually became part of the mainstream of the Buddhist traditions of East Asia. This is precisely what happened to the *Vajrasamādhi*. Whatever aspersions may initially have been cast on its

²¹ Even the most casual perusal of Chinese exegetical writings will reveal copious quotations from such apocryphal scriptures as *Jen-wang ching*, *P'u-sa ying-lo pen-yeh ching*, *T'i-wei Po-li ching*, and the *Vajrasamādhi*, as will be seen in the course of this study. Mizuno Kōgen, in his study of the apocryphal *Fa-chü ching* (*Dharmapada*), has suggested that “The San-lun, the T'ien-t'ai, the Fa-hsiang, the Hua-yen and other schools attached great importance to the sacred books and depended solely on genuine books. They took no notice of the pseudo-scriptures [viz., apocrypha]. The pseudo-scriptures made no appeal whatsoever to them” (“On the *Pseudo-Fa-ku-king*,” p. 395). This is most certainly wrong. As two of many examples to the contrary, see the extensive citations to apocryphal scriptures in Tao-cho's *An-lo chi*, given in Satō Ken, “*Anrakushū to gikyō*,” pp. 79–134; for Chih-i's use of apocryphal scriptures, see Makita Tairyō, “Tendai daishi no gikyō kan,” pp. 201–15.

origins, the text eventually silenced its critics by being cited frequently in the writings of the scholarly elite in East Asian Buddhism.

The discovery of such apocryphal texts threatens to force an extensive rethinking of many traditionally held views about the history of East Asian Buddhism. East Asians assumed that their Buddhist canons contained faithful translations of Sanskrit or Middle Indic *texta recepta*, which were then accurately commented upon by native exegetes. Attempts were usually made to anchor such scriptures in time and place by adding a colophon describing where and when it was translated, and by whom. Such colophons assured that the original text had been brought from the “Outer Regions” (Wai-yü; viz., India or Central Asia)—foreign origin being the principal criterion of textual authenticity for the East Asians.²² But the discovery that many of the seminal scriptures of East Asian Buddhism are in fact indigenous compositions calls much of that textual history into question. Some sūtras in the sinitic Buddhist canons—the tripiṭaka (*san-tsang*; lit., “three repositories”)—were unequivocally authentic translations and were quite rightly accepted into the canon by the bibliographical cataloguers, the arbiters of canonicity. Others were just as unequivocally spurious and banned from the canon, ultimately dropping from circulation. It is only in the last hundred years that several of these long-lost apocrypha were recovered from the Tun-huang cave site and made available for scholarly study. But a number of other scriptures contained moot points, or had checkered pasts, which at one time or another had brought their authenticity into question. These scriptures—which include such influential texts as *Ta-sheng ch’i-hsin lun* (Treatise on the awakening of faith according to the Mahāyāna), *Yüan-chüeh ching* (Book of consummate enlightenment), *Shou-leng-yen ching* (**Śūraṅgama-sūtra*), and the *Vajrasamādhi*—had to battle for acceptance. Eventually, however, their victory won, they were deemed bona fide—even if there were occasional pockets of dissent among the native commentators—and reprinted continually in the East Asia tripiṭakas. When such significant texts are recognized as being indigenous compositions, many of our most basic presumptions about the forces that influenced the evolution of sinitic Buddhist systems of thought are challenged. What we find is that the inspiration for many indigenous developments came not from India, but China.

It is especially the Ch’an school that relied heavily on the testimony of

²² Note the comments of the cataloguer Seng-yu: “[Apocryphal sūtras are scriptures that,] on the one hand, I have not heard that someone has gone afar to the Outer Regions [to obtain], or, on the other hand, I have not seen that they have been either received from, or translated by, Western visitors [i.e., foreign missionaries].” *Chu san-tsang chi-chi* 5, T 2145.55.39a2

apocryphal texts to authenticate its novel perspectives on the teachings of Buddhism. This should not be unexpected. Ch'an is commonly (if not sometimes stereotypically) regarded as the most quintessentially Sinitic of all the indigenous schools of East Asian Buddhism, incorporating into its doctrine, praxis, and rhetoric many elements deriving from the native tradition (often incorrectly labeled "Taoist"). Given that apocryphal texts too display a similar adaptation to East Asian religious and social milieux, it is no surprise that later Ch'an exegetes, such as Tsung-mi (780–841) and Yen-shou (904–975), would have made frequent use of apocryphal scriptures to justify their positions. That they may not have realized that some of these apocryphal texts, such as the *Vajrasamādhi*, were originally written by Ch'an adherents precisely to provide such justification only attests to the skill with which those authors did their work. Furthermore, the Ch'an school's use of such texts occurred despite its claim that it "does not rely on words and letters." When texts fulfilled a necessary purpose, even the most sacrosanct of shibboleths were conveniently ignored.

One of the major reasons for composing sūtras would have been to convey one's message in a guise familiar to the Buddhist believer, especially the ecclesiastical elite. For an apocryphal text to earn a niche in the tradition, it was vital to win over the scholarly arbiters of Buddhism, by orienting its message in a way that would be appealing to these opinion makers. One of the prominent features of Sinitic Buddhism, which apocryphal texts often exhibit, has been a syncretic approach to doctrine. East Asians were the inheritors of a highly developed Buddhist tradition, which was already split into a number of competing schools, some Indian, some Chinese in provenance. Buddhism was also not received en masse in East Asia but was introduced by successive waves of missionaries and translators who arrived initially from Central Asian kingdoms and Serindian oases, and eventually from the Buddhist homeland of India itself. All of these people claimed to be Buddhist, but to the East Asians their teachings must often have seemed diametrically opposed. Reconciling these variant strands of Buddhism occupied much of the attention of scholiasts in both China and Korea. Most indigenous schools of Chinese Buddhism had their own hermeneutical taxonomies (*p'an-chiao*; Kor. *pan'gyo*) by which they sought to bring order to this pandemonium of doctrines. Reconciling the disparate teachings of Buddhism was the principal focus of many of the works of Wŏnhyo, the preeminent Silla scholiast, especially his *Simmun hwajaeng-ron* (Ten approaches to the reconciliation of doctrinal controversy), *Kisillon-so* and *pyŏlgi* (his commentary and autocommentary to the *Awakening of Faith*), and *Kŭmgang sam-*

maegyōng-ron, his exegesis of the *Vajrasamādhi*. The syncretic concerns in Wōnhyo's thought strongly influenced the subsequent development of Korean Buddhism, and syncretism would become the watchword of the tradition from his time forward. The *Vajrasamādhi* too resonates closely with this Korean penchant for doctrinal harmony. Indeed, its emphasis on a comprehensive approach to Buddhist doctrine may account for much of its success in attracting the attention of Silla scholiasts.

The Vajrasamādhi as a Sinitic Apocryphon

Although the *Vajrasamādhi* ultimately is recognized by the tradition as a canonical scripture, its authenticity did not go unchallenged. The text was alleged to have been translated anonymously during the Northern Liang dynasty (A.D. 397–439), but suspicions remained about its origins until well into the twelfth century, and perhaps were never fully allayed given the continued scholarly interest in the topic. Ch'an polemicists like Chüeh-fan Hui-hung (1071–1128), the compiler of *Shih-men Hung Chüeh-fan lin-chien lu* (Forest records of Chüeh-fan Hui-hung), conveniently circumvented such concerns by declaring that "because [the *Vajrasamādhi*] has timelessness (*wu-shih*) and absence of nature (*wu-hsing*) as its principal themes, the prefatory sections of the sūtra do not indicate the time and place [of its preaching] and the histories, furthermore, do not record any information as to the era of its translation."²³ Iryōn (1206–1289), the author of one of the biographies of Wōnhyo that will figure in dating the *Vajrasamādhi*, remarked with regard to another Buddhist apocryphon, *Chan-ch'a shan-o yeh-pao ching* (Book on divining the karmic retribution of salutary and unsalutary actions), which similarly lacks information as to translator, provenance, or dating: "To doubt [the authenticity of] the text [because of such concerns] is like carrying away the hemp but leaving the gold."²⁴

But modern scholars of Buddhist apocrypha cannot so easily demur from such fundamental issues. Indeed, given the preliminary stage of research on Buddhist apocrypha, authenticity questions have dominated scholarly attention. Resolving such seemingly narrow textual concerns, however, often demands attention to the wider philosophical, ecclesiastical, and even political milieux that helped shape apocryphal materials. If the study of Buddhist apocrypha is to realize its full potential, a breadth of approach is required

²³ *Shih-men Hung Chüeh-fan lin-chien lu*, ZZ 2b, 21, 4, 303a.

²⁴ *Samguk yusa* (hereafter SGYS), T 2039.49.1008a4–5.

that goes beyond the different disciplines *sensu strictu* of East Asian humanities. The individual buddhologist, sinologist, folklorist, or historian of religion would be able to glean only so much about the origins of suspect scriptures. The classically trained buddhologist, for example, might be able to determine the textual filiations and doctrinal affinities of apocryphal texts like the *Vajrasamādhi*, but probably very little about the indigenous milieux that contextualize those scriptures. The sinologist, on the other hand, might be sensitive to the social and political contexts of apocrypha but would often have little interest in their doctrinal components. As this study will show, however, it is only when the methodologies of each of these disciplines are brought to bear on the study of the *Vajrasamādhi* that the real identity and significance of the scripture in East Asian Buddhism will be forthcoming. Hence, I hope that the approach I take here will contribute at least partially to breaking through some of the barriers that compartmentalize the various fields of East Asian studies and reveal some of the benefits that might be forthcoming from their crossfertilization.

My work on the *Vajrasamādhi* suggests as well that the study of apocryphal scriptures—if not of Buddhism as a whole—can be impeded by the very structure of the discipline of Buddhist studies. Buddhologists typically specialize in Indian, Chinese, Japanese, or Tibetan Buddhism, even though there are other divisions of the field that would be ideologically more felicitous, and historically more meaningful. Such specialization is especially pernicious when it obscures the manifold points of symbiosis across international borders that may themselves have contributed to the development of the national varieties of Buddhism. Just as the continental approach toward sinology pioneered by Peter Boodberg has come to be recognized as essential in the study of China, so too in Buddhist studies we must look at Buddhism as the organic whole it has always been, rather than in the splendid isolation of our artificial academic categorizations.²⁵

Previous research on the *Vajrasamādhi* epitomizes the types of problems that can occur when research is conducted along national lines. Because of the dominant role played by China in the evolution of East Asian Buddhism, virtually by default the search for the origins of texts written in

²⁵ Alvin P. Cohen, ed., *Selected Works of Peter A. Boodberg*, pp. xii–xiii. See my remarks about the need for a “pan-East Asiatic” perspective on sinic Buddhism in my article “Chinul’s Systematization of Chinese Meditative Techniques in Korean Sōn Buddhism,” pp. 199–200. Cf. Gari Ledyard’s comments about the need for a broader “East Asian history,” which would be “something greater than the sum of the history of its constituent parts” in his “Yin and Yang in the China-Manchuria-Korea Triangle,” p. 350.

Chinese has been limited to China alone, to the neglect of other areas of East Asia where Buddhism also flourished and where literary Chinese was also the principal vehicle of learned communication. Obviously, through sheer size alone the monolith of China would tend to dominate the creative work of East Asian Buddhism. But this need not imply that innovations did not take place elsewhere in Asia, which may have had a profound effect in neighboring lands as well. In fact, it is becoming increasingly apparent that we ignore at our peril the place of the “peripheral regions”—Tibet, Vietnam, Japan, and especially my main subject here, Korea—in any comprehensive description of “Chinese” Buddhism. I have already alluded to the contributions made by both domestic and expatriate Koreans in the development of Chinese Buddhism. But Korea was subject to many of the same forces and motivations that prompted the production of apocryphal texts in China. Korea also had access to virtually all the same sources that served as exemplars for composing Chinese native compositions. Clearly, there is no reason why the Koreans—or, indeed, any of the other peoples of East Asia—could not have written their own Buddhist scriptures, also in literary Chinese, which would have been able to exert as pervasive an influence as scriptures produced in China proper. And given the organic nature of the traditions, there is no reason why such a “peripheral” creation could not have found its way to China and been accepted by the Chinese as readily as one of its own indigenous compositions. This I will seek to show was the case with the *Vajrasamādhi*.

In evaluating a sūtra like the *Vajrasamādhi* that is suspected of being indigenous, there is a variety of information that must be weighed. Wording that is evocative of the argot and style of identifiable Chinese translations can indicate that a text already available in Chinese was the model for its composition. The doctrines showcased in the texts, the terminology it uses, even the type of Sanskrit transliterations it adopts will often parallel other explicitly apocryphal compositions. The intrusion of such typically Chinese notions as *yin/yang* cosmology may sometimes be enough to warrant suspicions about the origins of a scripture.²⁶ Specific examples of all such signs can be found in the *Vajrasamādhi*, leaving little doubt of the text’s non-Indian provenance. Thanks especially to the efforts of two pioneering scholars in

²⁶ Considerable care must be used, of course, in distinguishing such “indigenous elements.” See the monitions about interpreting filial piety (*hsiao*) as an exclusively East Asian moral concept in Gregory Schopen, “Filial Piety and the Monk in the Practice of Indian Buddhism: A Question of ‘Sinicization’ Viewed from the Other Side,” pp. 110–26.

the study of apocryphal scriptures, Mizuno Kōgen and Walter Liebenthal, some of the mystery surrounding the textual sources of the *Vajrasamādhi* has begun to fade.²⁷ We now have several well-documented examples of direct borrowing by the author of the *Vajrasamādhi* from Chinese translations of other scriptures and treatises. Chapter 6 of the text includes, for example, a passage taken verbatim from Hsüan-tsang's definitive 649 translation of the *Heart Sūtra*, which provides the terminus a quo of the composition of the *Vajrasamādhi*.²⁸ Certain transliterations of Sanskrit adopted by the writer from earlier translators—such as *amala* (“immaculate”)—contribute to our understanding of the indigenous literature with which the author was familiar.²⁹ The terminology used in the sūtra includes names of specific Chinese rivers, which would immediately cast doubts on the Indian authorship of the text.³⁰ These factors will receive further coverage later, and specific textual appropriations will be highlighted in the annotation to my translation of the *Vajrasamādhi*.

But while we may know that the *Vajrasamādhi* is not a translation of an Indian or Serindian text, earlier scholars have all worked under the tacit assumption that the text was composed in China just because it was written in Chinese.³¹ Thus, glaring evidence of the scripture's Korean origins has been ignored; and even when the suggestion was broached that the *Vajrasamādhi* might have been written in Korea, that opinion was based more on ad hoc stereotypes about the syncretic tendencies of Korean Buddhism than on a careful weighing of the relevant evidence.³² Korean scholars working on the

²⁷ Mizuno Kōgen, “Bodaidaruma no *Ninyūshigyō setsu to Kongōzammaikyō*,” pp. 33–57; Walter Liebenthal, “Notes on the ‘*Vajrasamādhi*,’ ” pp. 347–86. A recent summary of the text, which closely follows Mizuno's account, appears in Okabe Kazuo, “Zensō no chūsho to gigi kyōten,” pp. 360–62. The contributions these scholars have made to our understanding of *V/S* will be treated in the course of my discussion of the text.

²⁸ *Mo-ho po-jo po-lo-mi-to hsin ching (Mahāprajñāpāramitāhṛdaya-sūtra)*, T 251.8.848c14–15; see discussion in Mizuno, p. 46.

²⁹ See discussion in Mizuno, p. 45; Liebenthal, pp. 370–74; and see the annotation to my translation.

³⁰ Mizuno, p. 42; Liebenthal, p. 361.

³¹ Mizuno (p. 40) assumed that *V/S* must have been written in the Shan-tung or Liao-tung regions of northeastern China because of the role of the Dragon King in revealing the scripture; Liebenthal (pp. 377–86) looked to North China instead. Their arguments will be countered elsewhere in this book. It should be noted that Mizuno's dating of the composition of *V/S* at between 650 and 665 (p. 40) or 660 and 680 (“*Gisaku no Hokkukyō ni tsuite*,” p. 32) is completely arbitrary, based neither on any account concerning the text appearing in Wōnhyo's biographies nor on catalogue references.

³² See especially Kimura Senshō, “*Kongōzammaikyō no shingi mondai*,” pp. 115–16. Although Kimura broaches the possibility of a Korean origin for the text, he provides no evidence for his hypothesis, and his reasoning is decidedly circular. After summarizing the earlier re-

sūtra have also been excessively provincial: while contributing valuable studies on the importance of Wŏnhyo's commentary to the *Vajrasamādhi* in the development of Korean Buddhist thought, they have carefully skirted coverage of the scripture itself or the issue of its authenticity.³³

Based on my own research on this text, I feel that many of the problems surrounding the *Vajrasamādhi* can be resolved, first, through close consideration of the documentation concerning the text available in Buddhist bibliographical catalogues and evidence from its textual lineages. This examination must be followed by careful comparison with information gleaned from the hagiographies of the Buddhist figure most closely linked with the sūtra, the Korean scholiast Wŏnhyo, who wrote the first commentary to the text sometime during the latter part of the seventh century. Wŏnhyo's associations with the *Vajrasamādhi* are far from adventitious and clearly figure more importantly in forming a workable hypothesis about the sūtra's origins than modern scholars have heretofore dared to suspect. Finally, the unique doctrines of the text must be examined with reference to the ecclesiastical and political conditions prevalent in the Korean kingdom of Silla, where I judge the text to have been composed; this comparison will narrow considerably the possible candidates for authorship. Catalogue evidence, textual filiations, hagiographical accounts, doctrinal innovations, and the prospective cultural and religious milieux taken in isolation will not be sufficient to make any credible judgment about the dating, provenance, and authorship of the text. Taken together, however, such factors serve as crucial pieces of a complex puzzle, which will indicate that the *Vajrasamādhi* was written in Korea, sometime around A.D. 685, by an early adept of the nascent Sŏn tradition on the peninsula, a man I shall call Pŏmnang.

search of Mizuno, Liebenthal, and Yanagida Seizan, Kimura simply notes that the syncretic focus of *VS* tallies well with the ecumenical religious climate commonly considered to characterize Unified Silla Buddhism (668–935), and he suggests that the Silla origins of the text should be explored. While I intend to show that aspects of this suggestion are correct, on the basis of his approach to the question of origin, the corollary—that *VS* was popular in Silla precisely because it was so close to the sympathies of Silla Buddhists—would be equally valid.

³³ An outstanding study of Wŏnhyo's commentary to *VS* has been made by Ko Ikchin, "Wŏnhyo ūi sasang ūi silch'ŏn wŏlli," pp. 225–55; Ko, however, ignores the problems of the sūtra's authenticity and focuses only on the place of the commentary in Wŏnhyo's thought. Han Kīdu (*Silla sidae ūi Sŏn sasang*, pp. 23–34) has discussed insightfully many of the major issues raised in both text and commentary and views the commentary as an integral part of the Silla Sŏn tradition. Han suggests (p. 23) that without the impetus provided by *KSGR* to the study of Sŏn, the pilgrimage of Koreans to the Chinese mainland to receive instruction directly from Ch'an masters might never have taken place. Han's treatment adumbrates the close connections between *VS* and Korean Buddhism that I will explore in this study.

Despite the apparent aplomb with which I tell this story of the *Vajrasamādhi*, I more than anyone am aware of how tentative some of my conclusions must be. On the dating and provenance of the text, I am quite confident; on the final question of authorship I am rather less sure. I have at times been tempted to offer the reader a choice of possible endings to this tale. I have refrained, however, and give what I perceive to be the most plausible scenario, based on my evaluation of the available evidence. The authorship case I make is, I believe, strong, but mostly circumstantial; smoking guns rarely survive a millennium, especially in the face of a determined coverup or widespread indifference. Finally, I portray the putative author of the text as more a shell for the type of person who would have been able to compose the *Vajrasamādhi*, rather than a real historical figure. But for texts separated from us by such vast temporal, geographical, and linguistic gulfs, it is a matter of some satisfaction that we will be able to come as far as we do. That the evidence does not allow us to resolve each and every outstanding question about the text seems hardly reason to despair and withhold the story indefinitely. We must glean as much from the evidence as it may support, and hope that others will see more in the material presented here, or find other supporting evidence that will reveal new things.

Let me first proceed to a survey of the contents of the *Vajrasamādhi* and the traditional view of its message.

The Eclecticism of the *Vajrasamādhi*

The *Kūṃgang sammae-kyōng*—which is usually known in Western scholarship as the *Vajrasamādhi-sūtra*, after the Sanskrit reconstruction of its title—is one of the many scriptures classified in China as *samādhi-sūtras* (*san-mei ching*). Such texts were recognized since the late fifth century as a distinct genre of sūtra literature. They may have been important in the early evolution of Ch’an, as seen, for example, with the *Hui-yin san-mei ching* (Book of [the tathāgatas’] seal of wisdom samādhi), which is thought to have been influential in Bodhidharma’s teachings.³⁴ The plethora of citations from the *Vajrasamādhi* appearing in East Asian exegetical, didactic, and doxographic works shows that the text pervaded the Sinitic Buddhist tradition, rivalling

³⁴ See Seng-yu’s reference to the “*samādhi-sūtra* class” (*san-mei-ching lei*) in *Chu-san-tsang chi-chi* 9, T 2145.55.62b8–9. For a survey of this genre of sūtra, see Ōminami Ryūshō, “Sanmai kyōten no yakushutsu to juyō.” For Bodhidharma’s use of *Hui-yin san-mei ching* (T 632.15.460c–468a), see McRae, pp. 20–21.

the influence exerted by many translated Indian scriptures. This is especially so when the importance of the *Vajrasamādhi* to Ch'an is taken into account, a topic I shall return to often in the course of this book.

As the traditional commentators to the *Vajrasamādhi* have sought to explain, the vision implicit in the sūtra is that of a grand synthesis of Mahāyāna doctrine, something akin to what is found in the *Lañkāvatāra-sūtra*, one of the more popular models for Chinese apocryphal scriptures. This eclecticism is suggested in the preface to Wōnhyo's commentary to the *Vajrasamādhi*: "There are none of the Mahāyāna's dharma-characteristics that are not encompassed [by this scripture], nor none of [the Mahāyāna's] theme that has unlimited meaning that is not included in it. This is why it is said that its [three different] titles are not frivolously given."³⁵ The two alternate titles given to the text in its Epilogue are clear indications of this synthetic concern: *Compendium of Mahāyāna Sūtra* (*Sōp taesūng-kyōng*; *Mahāyānasamgraha-sūtra*) and *Source of Immeasurable Doctrine Sūtra* (*Muryangūijong-kyōng*; *Anantanirdeśasiddhānta*).³⁶ Chu-chen (d.u.), the Ch'ing dynasty commentator to the *Vajrasamādhi*, also points out how elements from each of the "three repositories" of the Buddhist canon appear in the sūtra:

Now this *Vajrasamādhi-sūtra* originally belonged to the scriptural repository (*sūtrapīṭaka*). However, the reference in the scripture to the three moral codes includes the repository of discipline (*vinayapīṭaka*). Its dialogues, from beginning to end, all thoroughly analyze profound principles and it thus includes as well the entire repository of exegetical writing (*śāstrapīṭaka*). Hence, all the tripīṭaka is included therein.³⁷

From a variety of standpoints, then, and according to different commentators of varying times and places, a syncretic approach to Buddhist thought has been considered the *Vajrasamādhi*'s predominant concern.

This synthesis was not, however, an end in itself. The sūtra's first commentator, Wōnhyo, for example, suggests a higher purpose: to supply the foundation for a workable soteriology by providing a comprehensive system of meditative praxis. Following Wōnhyo's hermeneutic of the text, chapter 1, "Prologue," surveys the basic qualities of the adamant absorption (*vajrasamādhi*) after which the text is named. There, the *vajrasamādhi* is said

³⁵ KSGR 1, p. 961b7-8.

³⁶ The significance of these titles is discussed in Takamine Ryōshū, *Kegon to Zen to no tsūro*, pp. 150-51.

³⁷ Chu-chen, *T'ung-tsung chi* 1, p. 225a16-17.

to be a unique variety of absorption accessed by the Buddha himself, in which all doubts are resolved and all things incorporated into the one, all-encompassing buddha-vehicle. Chapters 2 through 7 are a progressive exposition of the actual process of contemplation practice (*kwanhaeng*) undertaken by the adept during the Semblance Age of the dharma (Hsiang-fa; Pratiṛūpaka), when Buddhism was in its initial stages of degeneration. Chapter 2, “The Signless Dharma,” explains the technique of signless contemplation, which frees the meditator from the tendency to assume that both person and dharmas are ultimately real. Chapter 3, “The Practice of Nonproduction,” describes a type of practice in which one trains to become completely unattached even to the fruits of meditation, thus allowing the mind to achieve perfect calm. Chapter 4, “The Inspiration of Original Enlightenment,” explains how the practitioner may thence continue on to benefit all sentient beings through relying on the powers inherent in the innate enlightenment of his mind. Chapter 5, “Approaching the Edge of Reality,” describes the transition from illusory perception to true reality. Chapter 6, “The Voidness of the True Nature,” explains that all spiritual practices derive from the innate voidness of the true nature. This contemplative process culminates in chapter 7, “The Tathāgatagarbha,” which reveals that all the approaches to practice discussed previously culminate in access to the tathāgatagarbha, the womb or embryo of buddhahood—the realization of the original enlightenment that is inherent in all beings. The final chapter, “Dhāraṇī,” removes any lingering doubts on the part of the audience as to the message of the sūtra and transmits the scripture to posterity.³⁸

This soteriological orientation of the *Vajrasamādhi* is brought out also by Chu-chen. His exegesis interprets each chapter in terms of a specific stage, or *bhūmi*, on the bodhisattva path (*mārga*). The “Prologue” is the section in which faith is aroused concerning the one buddha-vehicle; this faith then serves as the proleptic cause for the eventual fruition of buddhahood. “Signless Dharma” is the chapter dealing with *prajñā* (wisdom) and refers specifically to the sixth *bhūmi* of the bodhisattva path, “Disposed toward Enlightenment” (*hsien-ch’ien ti; abhimukhībhūmi*). “Practice of Nonproduction” discusses the acquiescence to the nonproduction of dharmas (*anutpattikadharmakṣānti*) that takes place on the seventh *bhūmi*, “Far-reaching” (*yüan-hsing ti; dūramgamābhūmi*). “Inspiration of Original Enlightenment” outlines

³⁸ KSGR 1, pp. 963c3–964a16; Wōnhyo gives an alternative exegesis at 963c21ff. This section is discussed also in Han Kidu, *Silla sidae ūi Sōn sasang*, pp. 24–26, and Ko Ikchun, pp. 231–36.

the process by which the ordinary sensory consciousnesses are transformed into the four types of wisdom; it corresponds to the eighth *bhūmi*, the “Unshakable” (*pu-tung ti; acalābhūmi*). “Approaching the Edge of Reality” explains the achievement of analytical knowledge (*pratisamvid*) that occurs on the ninth *bhūmi* of “Effective Intelligence” (*shan-hui ti; sādhumatībhūmi*). “Voidness of the True Nature” describes the consummation of progress through the *bhūmis*; it corresponds to the tenth and final stage of “Dharma Cloud” (*fa-yün ti; dharmameghābhūmi*). “Tathāgatagarbha” describes the knowledge that is gained at the level of “equal enlightenment” (*teng-chüeh*), the initial stage of buddhahood itself, in which one achieves the understanding that is “equal” in all the buddhas. “Dhāraṇī” represents the perfection of enlightenment that takes place at the level of “sublime enlightenment” (*miao-chüeh*), in which the adept is able to act out the myriad of salutary qualities gained through complete, perfect enlightenment (*anuttarasamyaksambodhi*). Finally, Chu-chen separates a concluding “Epilogue” from the rest of the final chapter, which discusses the need for proselytism and the transmission of the sūtra.³⁹ However, in a manner reminiscent of the *Avatamsaka-sūtra*, which was so important to both Hua-yen and Ch’an, Chu-chen advocates that both the beginning and end of the *Vajrasamādhi* actually include all the other chapters: “The ‘Signless Dharma’ chapter completely incorporates the teachings of the latter six chapters, while the final ‘Dhāraṇī’ chapter in fact amalgamates the teachings of the preceding six chapters.”⁴⁰ Chu-chen thus saw the sūtra as directed principally at an audience of advanced bodhisattvas on the final stages of the *mārga*: “This [*Vajra*]samādhi is not something that can be known by bodhisattvas [still training] in the provisional teachings who are on the levels of the [ten] abidings (*chu*) and [ten] practices (*hsing*) and working toward the *bhūmis*. Rather, it is only bodhisattvas following the absolute teachings of the one [buddha] vehicle, who have already ascended to the last five *bhūmis* and the two stages of equal and sublime enlightenments, who can realize and access it.”⁴¹

Accepting such systematic outlines of the *Vajrasamādhi* requires a consid-

³⁹ Chu-chen, *T’ung-tsung chi* 1, p. 228c–d. See discussion of this *mārga* schema in Takamine Ryōshū, *Kegon to Zen to no tsūro*, p. 155.

⁴⁰ Chu-chen, *T’ung-tsung chi* 1, p. 228b10–12. The Hua-yen parallel is the claim in the “Brahmacaryā Chapter” (Fan-hsing p’ün) that the inception and consummation of religious cultivation are identical: “The initial arousing of the *bodhicitta* is the attainment of *anuttarasamyaksambodhi*.” *Ta-fang-kuang fo hua-yen ching* 8, T 278.9.449c14; *Ta-fang-kuang fo hua-yen ching* 17, T 279.10.89a1–2.

⁴¹ Chu-chen, *T’ung-tsung chi* 1, p. 228b7–9.

erable leap of faith, though their premise is not utterly far-fetched. There is some continuity of interest in the *Vajrasamādhi*, especially in the emphasis seen through most of the sūtra on such seminal Mahāyāna concepts as “non-production” (*anutpādatva*) and “signlessness” (*alakṣaṇatva*). And it is true that the major orientation of the scripture is soteriological, given its stress on the concepts of samādhi, tathāgatagarbha, and enlightenment. Rather than the systematic “synthesis” that its commentators perceived, however, an eclectic “amalgam” may be a somewhat more accurate portrayal. The *Vajrasamādhi* provides a cross-section of the philosophical interests of contemporary East Asian Buddhist exegetes. But its examination of these debates is hardly rigorous, and the sūtra is most certainly not the methodical exposition of scholastic doctrine that its commentators perceive. There is, finally, relatively little sustained argumentation through the scripture, a fact adumbrated by the change of interlocutor from chapter to chapter.⁴²

But our author need not be taken unduly to task for the haphazard quality of his text. In his defense, such a tendency to anthologize is not unique to sinic apocrypha, but is actually quite common in Mahāyāna scriptures, if not in the sūtra genre as a whole.⁴³ D. T. Suzuki’s characterization of *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra*, a distant relative of our text, is apposite in reading the *Vajrasamādhi*: “The whole *Laṅkāvatāra* is just a collection of notes unsystematically strung together, and, frankly speaking, it is a useless task to attempt to divide them into sections, or chapters (*parivarta*), under some specific titles. Some commentators have tried to create a system in the *Laṅkāvatāra* by making each paragraph somewhat connected in meaning with the preceding as well as the succeeding one, but one can at once detect that there is something quite constrained or far-fetched about the attempt.”⁴⁴ In his neglect of organization, then, the author was in the best of company and can hardly be faulted.

My own reading of the *Vajrasamādhi* suggests that its author had an additional, and perhaps overriding, agenda supplementing the synthesis the commentators saw: to embed a new interpretation of Buddhism—Ch’an—within a doctrinal framework familiar to the scholiasts of his age, ensuring that it would be noticed and, with any luck, preserved. This agenda is particularly noticable in chapter 5, “Approaching the Edge of Reality,” which

⁴² A similar change of interlocutors is found also in the apocryphal *Yüan-chüeh ching*, *T* 842.17.913aff.

⁴³ A possibility raised by Luis Gómez, “The Structure and Meaning of a Pali *Sutta*.”

⁴⁴ Suzuki, *Studies*, p. 17; and note also his *Essays in Zen Buddhism*, series 1, p. 75.

includes the most prominent Ch'an elements. The text that brackets the discussion of the "two accesses" and of "guarding the one" there is quite difficult to construe and seems to be merely a vehicle for introducing these concepts from Ch'an. The forest of purposes of apocryphal texts can often be obscured by the trees (sometimes it seems more like the brambles) of their doctrinal allusions. As I seek to show was the case with the *Vajrasamādhi*, the teachings adopted in the scripture may in one sense be seen as a subterfuge for a strong polemical motive supporting Ch'an positions.

The Model for the *Vajrasamādhi*'s Narrative Structure

While the overriding message and general style of the *Vajrasamādhi* may be akin to those found in the *Lañkāvatāra*, the narrative structure of the sūtra is modeled after another influential Indian sūtra: the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-sūtra* (*Miao-fa lien-hua ching*), the renowned *Lotus Sūtra*. The first chapters in both texts were considered to be prologues to the actual texts of the *Lotus* and *Vajrasamādhi* sūtras themselves, which follow subsequently. During the time described in those prologues, the Buddha delivers a completely different sūtra—in the *Vajrasamādhi*'s case, an "expanded scripture" (*vaipulyasūtra*)—the titles of which are rubrics for the topics they treat. Once that initial scripture is finished, the Buddha enters into deep meditation, during which time a member of the assembly reiterates in verse the principal themes of the text. Only afterward does the Buddha withdraw from his absorption and begin to preach the real *Lotus* and the *Vajrasamādhi*. As perhaps we may expect, neither of these preliminary texts is attested anywhere in Indian sources. The titles are fabrications, intended to suggest to the reader that there is a vast store of Mahāyāna sūtras as yet unavailable in the world of men. In fact, the existence of such titles was itself a catalyst for textual production. The preliminary scripture mentioned in the *Lotus*, the *Sūtra of Immeasurable Doctrine* (*Wu-liang-i ching*), was eventually written in China, fulfilling its destiny as a known, circulating text.⁴⁵ If East Asian Buddhists had shown sufficient ini-

⁴⁵ *Wu-liang-i ching*, T 276.9.384a–389b. The translation is said to have taken place in 481 and is attributed to Dharmāgatayaśas (*Ku-chin i-ching t'u-chi* 4, T 2151.55.363b13). Ogiwara Unrai and Ōchō Enichi have made strong cases for its Chinese origin, however, based on stylistic evidence, unusual transliterations and translations of terms, and peculiar hierarchical arrangements of Indian doctrinal concepts. There are also problems in the biography of the alleged translator (this is his only attributed translation), and peculiar events in the transmission of the text, which suggest that attempts have been made to hide its spurious provenance by

tiative, the *Vajrasamādhi*'s preliminary scripture, *Single taste . . . Inspiration of Original Enlightenment Sūtra*, might also have made it into print!

To show how closely the *Vajrasamādhi* mirrors the structure and phraseology of the *Lotus*'s prologue, I have placed their opening sections side by side in table 1.1.⁴⁶

Why would the *Lotus Sūtra* have provided such a compelling model for an apocryphal text like the *Vajrasamādhi*? The *Lotus*, as is well known, was the focus of considerable scholarly investigation in East Asia, especially during fifth- and sixth-century China. Its eclectic tendencies were eminently suited to the syncretic approaches to doctrine pursued in many of the learned schools of sinic Buddhism. As the East Asian tradition evolved, the *Lotus* comes to be most closely associated with the T'ien-t'ai school, but this association is rather more tenuous during the era considered here, not really crystallizing until Chan-jan's (711–782) time. While the Ch'an school retrospectively seeks to align itself with first the *Lañkāvatāra* and later the *Diamond* sūtras, these alignments are not clear-cut until well into the eighth century. Throughout Ch'an's incipency, it too drew often upon the insights of the *Lotus* to authenticate its own approach. In the *Hsiu-hsin yao-lun* (Treatise on the essentials of cultivating the mind), for example, a seminal document of the East Mountain faction of early Ch'an that will be considered later, its putative author, Hung-jen (601–674), states that “my instructions to you are based on the *Lotus Sūtra*.”⁴⁷ The *Platform Sūtra*, presenting perhaps the quintessence of early and middle Ch'an doctrine, uses the *Lotus* as a text against

shrouding its origins in mystery Mitomo Kenyō has sought to refute each of the major points made by Ogiwara and Ōchō in order to establish the sūtra's Indian origin; see his “*Muryōgikyō Indo senjutsu setsu*,” pp. 1119–45. While Mitomo can provide controverting evidence to each specific point, his argument of Indian provenance is completely *ex silentio*. He does not provide any evidence that the sūtra ever circulated in India or that it was ever cited in Indian materials.

⁴⁶ For these passages, see *Miao-fa lien-hua ching*, T 262.9.1c–5b27; translation adapted from Leon Hurvitz, trans., *Scripture of the Lotus Blossom of the Fine Dharma*, pp. 3–22; and see *VS*, chaps. 1 and 2. For Wōnhyo's discussion of the structural relationship between *VS* and the *Lotus*, see *KSGR* 1, p. 963a11–17. Chu-chen (*T'ung-tsung chi*, pp. 226b–227a) also notes the affinities between the *Lotus* and *VS*, going so far as to try to place *VS* within T'ien-t'ai's fivefold temporal taxonomy of the teachings. After discussing various theories concerning the placement of the text, he attempts to prove that the preaching of *VS* succeeded that of *Lotus Sūtra*—the *Lotus* being designed to excise the initial doubts and regrets of the congregation, *VS* instead directed toward those who had already completed all the *bhūmis*. Cf. the similar narrative structures in the openings to the apocryphal texts *Chan-ch'a shan-o yeh-pao ching* 1, T 839.17.901c; and *Yüan-chüeh ching*, T 842.17.913a–b.

⁴⁷ See the Korean edition, which bears the title *Ch'oesangsūng-ron*, T 2011.48.378a20; cf. translation in McRae, p. 126.

TABLE 1.1

The Prologues to the *Lotus Sūtra* and the *Vajrasamādhi*

<i>Lotus Sūtra</i>	<i>Vajrasamādhi Sūtra</i>
1. Thus I once heard.	1. Thus I once heard.
2. The Buddha was dwelling in the great city of Rājagṛha, on Mount Gṛdhrakūta, together with a great assembly of twelve thousand bhikṣus, all of whom were arhats. Their names were . . . Śāriputra, Mahāmaudgalyāyana, . . . Subhūti, . . . a great many such arhats as these. . . .	2. The Buddha was dwelling in the great city of Rājagṛha, on Mount Gṛdhrakūta, together with a great assembly of ten thousand bhikṣus, all of whom had attained the arhat path. Their names were Śāriputra, Mahāmaudgalyāyana, Subhūti—there were many such arhats as these.
3. Furthermore, there were eighty thousand bodhisattva-mahāsattvas, . . . and other bodhisattvas like these. . . .	3. Furthermore, there were two thousand bodhisattva-mahāsattvas. Their names were Haet'al Bodhisattva, Simwang Bodhisattva, Muju Bodhisattva, and other bodhisattvas like these. . . .
4. [See section 7.]	4. Furthermore, there were six hundred million devas, dragons, yakṣas, gandharvas, aśuras, garuḍas, kinnaras, mahorāgas, humans, and nonhumans.
5. At that time, the World Honored One, surrounded by the fourfold congregation, showered with offerings, deferentially treated and revered, preached a Mahāyāna sūtra on behalf of all the bodhisattvas, entitled <i>The Immeasurable doctrine.</i>	5. At that time, the Lord, surrounded by the great congregation, preached a Mahāyāna sūtra on behalf of all the great congregation, entitled <i>Practice of the single taste, truth, signless, nonproduction, certitude, edge of reality, and the inspiration of original enlightenment.</i> If one hears this sūtra or retains even one four-line verse [of it], this person will then access the stage of the Buddha's knowledge; he will be able to proselyte sentient beings with appropriate expedients and become the great spiritual mentor of all sentient beings.
6. After the Buddha had preached this sūtra, he folded his legs into full lotus position, and entered into the Abode of the Immeasurable Doctrine absorption, with his body and mind motionless.	6. After the Buddha had preached this sūtra, he folded his legs into full lotus position, and entered into the adamant absorption, with his body and mind motionless.

TABLE 1.1 (cont.)

<i>Lotus Sūtra</i>	<i>Vajrasamādhi Sūtra</i>
7. At that time, in the assembly, there were . . . devas, dragons, yakṣas, gandharvas, aśuras, garuḍas, kinnaras, mahorāgas, humans, and nonhumans . . . these great assemblies gained what they never had before. . . .	7. [See section 4.]
8. Thereupon, the bodhisattva Maitreya, wishing to reiterate the meaning of this [sūtra that had just been preached] , questioned with <i>gāthās</i>	8. At that time there was a bhikṣu named Agada, in the congregation, who arose from his seat, joined his palms together, and genuflected in foreign fashion. Wishing to reiterate the meaning of this [sūtra that had just been preached] , he recited <i>gāthās</i>
9. Arising from the serenity of his samādhi , the World Honored One addressed Śāriputra: “The wisdom of all the buddhas is profound and incalculable. The approaches to that wisdom are difficult to comprehend and difficult to access. They are not something that are known or cognized by any of the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas.	9. Arising from his samādhi , the Lord then spoke these words, “The stage of wisdom of all the buddhas accesses the given nature of the real characteristic of dharmas. For this reason, [the buddhas’] expedients and superpowers are all inspired by signlessness. The explicit meaning of the one enlightenment is difficult to comprehend and difficult to access. It is not something that is known or cognized by any adherents of the two vehicles [of śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas] ; it may only be known by the buddhas and bodhisattvas.

which to test a student’s understanding.⁴⁸ The *Lotus* was finally a common focus of cultic and ritual activity in East Asia. For all these reasons, then, the author of the *Vajrasamādhi* had good cause to frame his text in such a way that it would compare with one of the most popular, and undeniably authentic, Indian scriptures ever translated into Chinese.

⁴⁸ See the story of Fa-ta being “turned by the *Lotus*,” in Philip Yampolsky, trans., *The Platform Sūtra of the Sixth Patriarch*, sect. 42, pp. 165–68.

But if an indigenous sūtra like the *Vajrasamādhi* was to have any hope of entering the mainstream of East Asian Buddhism, it had first to gain the sanction of the arbiters of canonicity, the scriptural cataloguers. Without such sanction, few texts were able to overcome the onus of fraudulence, which was seen as threatening the bibliographical impeccability of Buddhism, if not the very viability of the tradition as a whole—either reason enough to blacklist the scripture and bar it from being entered into the canon. Let us, then, turn to the cataloguers' entries on the *Vajrasamādhi* as a way of exploring traditional views of the sūtra's pedigree.

The *Vajrasamādhi* in the Chinese Catalogues

In any attempt to ascertain the dating, provenance, and authorship of a suspect scripture, it is to the Buddhist bibliographical catalogues that one must first turn. While the inherent critical limitations of such catalogues should be recognized,⁴⁹ when carefully used they can serve as an invaluable source of information on the spread and currency of a text in different dynastic periods and geographical regions. This examination of the treatment of the *Vajrasamādhi* in the catalogues will offer a particularly graphic example of the sort of information that may be gleaned from the catalogues, and especially of the ways in which that information can be used in evaluating traditional ascriptions about the origins of a sūtra.

The earliest reference known for a *Vajrasamādhi-sūtra* (*Chin-kang san-mei ching*) in East Asian catalogues appears in a section of Tao-an's *Tsung-li chung-ching mu-lu* (Comprehensive catalogue of all the scriptures): the *Liang-t'u i-ching lu* (Anomalous sūtras from the Liang region).⁵⁰ In this pioneering catalogue, completed in A.D. 374, the compiler, Tao-an (312–385), lists only sūtras he had perused himself at least once in his career; sūtras of unusual content or style that he knew to exist only in one region are listed under his classification of *i-ching* (“anomalous sūtras”).⁵¹ Based on this notice, we can

⁴⁹ See the discussion in Lewis R. Lancaster, *Review of Répertoire du Canon Bouddhique Sino-Japonais*, pp. 130–31. For an extensive analysis of the treatment of simtic apocrypha in the Chinese catalogues, see Kyoko Tokuno, “The Evaluation of Indigenous Scriptures in Chinese Buddhist Bibliographical Catalogues.”

⁵⁰ Tao-an's *Liang-t'u i-ching lu* is discussed by Hayashiya Tomojirō, *Kyōroku kenkyū*, pp. 414–16, and its contents are reconstructed on pp. 416–18. Liang-t'u is Liang-chou in Kansu province.

⁵¹ Hayashiya, *Kyōroku kenkyū*, p. 414; noted also by Erik Zürcher, *The Buddhist Conquest of China*, vol. 1, p. 195. The term used here, *i-ching* (“anomalous scripture”; sometimes *ku-i ching* [“archaic anomalous scripture”]), refers to “peculiar” or “unusual” scriptures geographically

be sure of the existence of a one-*chüan* text entitled *Vajrasamādhi* during the latter part of the fourth century. However, as Tao-an's was only a regional catalogue, listing just works from those locales in which he had traveled personally, there is no information on the extent of the scripture's diffusion in other areas of China. However, since even Tao-an knew of the sūtra's existence in only the Liang region of northwestern China, its circulation may have been quite limited.

Tao-an's listing is picked up one century later by Seng-yu (445–518) in his *Ch'u san-tsang chi-chi* (A collection of notes concerning the translation of the tripiṭaka), which includes many sections lifted wholesale from Tao-an's catalogue. Because the *Vajrasamādhi* is not included in Seng-yu's list of extant works, we can only assume that he did not know personally of a copy of the sūtra circulating anywhere around his base of operations, the Chiangnan area, just south of the Yangtze River. Since Seng-yu's catalogue was also a regional compilation covering only southern Chinese Buddhism, we cannot be absolutely certain that there was not a *Vajrasamādhi* in circulation somewhere in northern or western China at that time; however, Tao-an's implication that the text was available only in the far northwest, and the lack of any reference at all to the text in the south, certainly provide strong grounds for doubting the text's currency during the fifth century.⁵²

The first attempt at a comprehensive catalogue covering all of China was *Chung-ching mu-lu*, compiled in 594 by Fa-ching (fl. late sixth century) and nineteen associates in a period of just over two months. This catalogue was compiled as a means of consolidating Sui dominion over China, by providing a record of the full range of Buddhist literature available in Chinese; this information was then to be used as the basis for a Sui edition of the Buddhist tripiṭaka, which would be disseminated throughout the empire. Fa-ching

restricted to one particular region of China (Hayashiya, pp. 414–15); and cf. Tao-an's definition of *ku-i*: "Although the text of the scripture is disorganized and has several lacunae, by examining the extant sections, the [identity of the] old and present [recensions] can be discerned" (*Ch'u san-tsang chi-chi* 3, T 2145.55.15b13–14). This term should be carefully distinguished from *i-ch'u* ("variant translation [lit., publication]"), which was used by Tao-an and his successors to refer to different Chinese translations of the same Sanskrit or Middle Indic original (*Chu san-tsang chi-chi* 3, T 2145.55.13c22); see the discussion by Antonino Forte, *Political Propaganda and Ideology in China*, p. 17.

⁵² The noncomprehensiveness of Seng-yu's catalogue is discussed in Hayashiya, *Kyōroku Kenkyū*, pp. 144–45. This catalogue is usually considered to have been compiled between 494 and 497. It has been noted, however, that references in *Ch'u san-tsang chi-chi* indicate that at least some portions of it were not compiled until after 510; see Naitō Ryūo, "Shutsu sanzō kishū no senshū nenji ni tsuite," p. 163; and his subsequent article, "Sōyū no chosaku katsudō," p. 285, where he dates some materials to 515.

includes a listing for a *Vajrasamādhi* in his section on single-edition texts by anonymous translators (*tan-pen shih-i*), but he gives no information as to whether the text was then extant.⁵³ As Hayashiya Tomojirō has pointed out, Fa-ching, in his zeal for comprehensiveness, gave complete listings for all sūtras mentioned in previous catalogues as well as for scriptures that were actually extant at that time in Sui China; hence, extant and nonextant sūtras were included indiscriminately in the listings, and no separate section was set aside just for nonextant materials.⁵⁴ For this reason, we cannot be absolutely certain about the status of the text at the time of the compilation of this catalogue, though it does seem most probable that Fa-ching simply copied the reference to the sūtra directly from the entry in Tao-an's catalogue, which had been recorded in *Ch'u san-tsang chi-chi*.

Seng-yu's citation from Tao-an's catalogue is also quoted verbatim by Fei Ch'ang-fang (fl. late sixth century) in his *Li-tai san-pao chi* (Notes on the successive triratnas), another Sui attempt at a comprehensive catalogue, written in 597. Fei lived during a period of resurgent Taoist influence at the court and the ardent religious rivalries engendered thereby. In attempting to counter this burgeoning Taoist strength, Fei's catalogue deliberately distorted many textual references, falsely attributing to famous translators Buddhist texts that were then circulating as anonymous in order to give them more credibility. Although his ascriptions provided the basis for the attributions made in the later *K'ai-yüan shih-chiao lu*—from whence they entered the mainstream of the Chinese tradition—they are completely unreliable for determining dating or authorship.⁵⁵ His notice therefore offers little help in determining the currency of the *Vajrasamādhi* during his time.

Based on these notices in the catalogues of Seng-yu and Fei Ch'ang-fang, Chu-chen made the only attempt among the classical commentators to the *Vajrasamādhi* to determine the translator of the scripture. He proposes that Tao-an himself had rendered the *Vajrasamādhi* into Chinese: "Furthermore, based on the account in [*Li-tai*] *san-pao chi*, Tao-an of Fu Chien's [court, viz., the Former Ch'in dynasty] had also translated some twenty-four works of

⁵³ See Hayashiya, *Kyōroku kenkyū*, pp. 77–79. The *Fa-ching lu* reference states that "the above 123 sūtras [including *VS*] are all single edition [texts] by anonymous translators (*tan-pen shih-i*)"; (*T* 2146.55.121c14); Liebenthal (p. 349) mistranslates this entry to read "extant in a separate edition" and postulates that the text was still extant in the sixth century; this, as will be seen, is by no means certain.

⁵⁴ Hayashiya, *Kyōroku kenkyū*, pp. 77–78.

⁵⁵ The *Li-tai san-pao chi* is treated by Hayashiya (*Kyōroku kenkyū*, pp. 82–85), where he discusses the number of wrong attributions made in the catalogue; and pp. 151–52, where he calls attention to the uselessness of its bibliographical references in determining textual origins.

scripture. Moreover, according to Seng-yu, [the *Vajrasamādhi*] was first listed in Tao-an's *Liang-t'u i-ching [lu]*. Perforce, [VS] was translated by Tao-an."⁵⁶ From the previous catalogue listings, however, it is clear that Chu-chen's surmise can hardly be correct. There is no indication from any catalogue that Tao-an himself had made the *Vajrasamādhi* translation, and this conclusion hardly follows from the fact that the sūtra first appears in Tao-an's early listings. Despite Chu-chen's attempt to resolve some of the difficulties concerning the origins of the *Vajrasamādhi*, there are good reasons to reject his hypothesis out of hand.

Since the utility of Fa-ching's catalogue as a basis for a Sui edition of the tripiṭaka was considerably diminished by his indiscriminate listings of both extant and nonextant sūtras, still another catalogue that carefully distinguished the extant from the nonextant was compiled under Sui auspices in 602. This was *Chung-ching mu-lu* by Yen-ts'ung (557–610), a noted Chinese Sanskritist, historiographer, and cataloguer. Any doubts about the status of the *Vajrasamādhi* that might have remained from the catalogue entries of Fa-ching and Fei Ch'ang-fang are quickly allayed by Yen-ts'ung's work: here, the sūtra is listed among 378 nonextant texts (*ch'üeh-pen*) in a total of 610 fascicles.⁵⁷ Thanks to this reference, we are finally certain that the *Vajrasamādhi* was not in circulation anywhere in China at least by 602. In addition, since the only unequivocal reference to the existence of the text in earlier catalogues was in Tao-an's compilation, there is good reason to assume that the text had, in fact, dropped out of circulation sometime during the latter part of the fourth century.

The *Vajrasamādhi* remained nonextant through the end of the seventh century. In the 695 *Ta-Chou kan-ting chung-ching mu-lu* (The Great Chou [dynasty's] revised catalogue of all the scriptures), compiled during the reign of Wu Chao (r. 690–705)—and significantly, fully nine years after the death of Wōnhyo, the first commentator to the sūtra—the *Vajrasamādhi* is still listed as lost. This catalogue, compiled from the combined information of seventy monks from around the country, was meant to be exhaustive and is noted for including in its entries every bit of available information—even spurious references from previous catalogues.⁵⁸ If this sūtra were extant in China at that time, the chance that it would have been missed by these diligent cata-

⁵⁶ Chu-chen, *T'ung-tsung chi* 1, p. 227c12–14.

⁵⁷ Hayashiya (*Kyōroku kenkyū*, p. 78) notes that Yen-ts'ung's *Chung-ching mu-lu* is a catalogue of exclusively extant works. VS and its categorization into the nonextant list appears at T 2147.55.175a25–26 and 176b28.

⁵⁸ See discussion in Hayashiya, *Kyōroku kenkyū*, pp. 94–100.

loguers is exceedingly slim at best. Wōnhyo's exegesis of the sūtra, written just a few years before, had apparently not yet been transmitted to the mainland, and the *Vajrasamādhi* remained unknown in China. This assumption that the text was nonextant in China at least through 695, while it was known in Korea at least a decade before, is borne out by the fact that the text appears on the nonextant list in four other catalogues compiled between 602 and 695.⁵⁹

The *Vajrasamādhi* dramatically reenters the Chinese catalogues some three centuries after its disappearance in China in *K'ai-yüan shih-chiao lu* (Catalogue in explanation of the teachings, compiled during the K'ai-yüan era), completed in 730 by Chih-sheng (658–740). (See table 1.2 for catalogue listings of the *Vajrasamādhi*.) The *Vajrasamādhi* is still listed as the product of an unknown translator of the Pei-Liang period (397–439), but the text known to Chih-sheng is cited as having been reconstructed from scattered folios (*shih-i p'ien-ju*).⁶⁰ Hayashiya Tomojirō was the first to note this anomaly concerning the listing of the *Vajrasamādhi* in the Chinese catalogues. Based on his pioneering research on translation terminology and techniques, he deduced that the *Vajrasamādhi* as it appeared in *K'ai-yüan lu*—the version extant today—could not have been composed before the time of Kumārajīva (344–413), because of the use of Buddhist technical equivalencies and transliterations that first appear only in Kumārajīva's translations. Hence, he concludes that the *Vajrasamādhi* appearing in Tao-an's late fourth-century catalogue and the sūtra by the same name listed in the eighth century could not have been the same text.⁶¹ His deductions were confirmed by Mizuno who, however, was apparently unaware of Hayashiya's earlier conclusions.⁶² The fact that the *Vajrasamādhi* is listed as nonextant in China through 695, reappearing as a "reconstructed" text only in 730, shows that the Koreans knew of the text several decades before the Chinese. We must take seriously the possibility that it is of Korean, not Chinese, provenance.

⁵⁹ The dates of the catalogues in table 1.2 follow Yabuki Keiki ("Tonkō shutsudo gūgi kobuten ni tsuite," pp. 48–49) and Hayashiya (*Kyōroku Kenkyū*, pp. 13–15); these texts are listed according to their compilers' names or the reign periods in which they were published. Some of the dates are still open to investigation, as for the *Ch'u san-tsang chi-chi*.

⁶⁰ Discussed in Mizuno, pp. 37–38, and p. 38 n. 5, where he gives other examples of reconstructed texts. See also Hayashiya, *Kyōroku kenkyū*, p. 1078, and Kimura, "*Kongōzammaikyō*," p. 106.

Note also the use of *san-ching* in Tao-an's catalogue in *Ch'u san-tsang chi-chi* 3, T 2145 55.15b, which indicates that *i-ching* were often *san-ching*, "scattered," i.e., fragmentary, sūtras.

⁶¹ Hayashiya, *Kyōroku kenkyū*, pp. 1078–79.

⁶² Mizuno, pp. 37–38.

TABLE 1.2
 Catalogue Entries for the *Vajrasamādhī-Sūtra*

Catalog	Date	VS		Citation	Comments
		Extant?			
<i>Tao-an lu</i>	374	Yes		T 2145.55.18c6	Anomalous <i>sūtra</i> from Liang-t'u; north only.
<i>Seng-yu lu</i>	494-7	no		T 2145.55.18c6	Cites <i>Tao-an lu</i> ; not extant in Chang-nan.
<i>Fa-ching lu</i>	594	?		T 2146.55.121a14	Anonymous translator section; extant and non-extant texts cited together.
<i>Li-tai san-pao chi</i>	597	?		T 2034.49.85a18	Copies <i>Seng-yu</i> entry.
<i>Jen-shou lu</i>	602	no		T 2147.55.176b28	Only extant works listed; cited as lost <i>sūtra</i> .
<i>Nei-tien lu</i>	664	?		T 2149.55.256c4	Cites <i>Tao-an lu</i>
<i>Ching-t'ai lu</i>	666	no		T 2148.55.214a29	Cited as lost.
<i>Ku-chin i-ching t'u-chi</i>	n.d.	?		T 2151.55.361a24	Cites <i>Tao-an lu</i>
<i>Ta Chou lu</i>	695	no		T 2153.55.439c8 .448a25 .450a21	Cited in anonymous translator section. Cited as lost. Cited as lost.
<i>K'ai-yüan lu</i>	730	yes		T 2154.55.522b14 .605b15 .667a22 .688c20 .712b9	Cited as extant; two other <i>sūtras</i> mentioned with it are lost. Reconstructed text; anonymous translator. Cited as reconstructed text. In 27 folios; note Wonhyo's biography; in same wrapper with 23 other texts. Anonymous translator.
<i>K'ai-yüan lu lüeh-ch'u</i>	730	yes		T 2155.55.734b2	Anonymous translator.
<i>Nara shakyō</i>	737	yes		<i>Nara shakyō</i> #611	Manuscript copied in Japan in this year.
<i>Ch'en-yüan lu</i>	800	yes		T 2157.55.819a22 .938c10 .1006a8 .1036b10	

Why would Chih-sheng have allowed the inclusion of the *Vajrasamādhi*, suspiciously reappearing after a three-hundred-year hiatus, in his listing of canonical texts? We can only presume that he believed the earlier *Vajrasamādhi* listed by Tao-an had been rediscovered. Its apparent recovery in Korea might have rendered the authenticity of this *Vajrasamādhi* that much more plausible to Chih-sheng: lost since the fourth century in China, the sūtra had continued to circulate in Korea whence, thanks to the international attention engendered by Wŏnhyo's commentary to the text, it finally made its way back to China. During Buddhism's tenure in Korea it becomes common for scriptures lost in China to be reintroduced via Korean editions.⁶³ Although the *Vajrasamādhi* would be the earliest known example of such reimportation, this therefore need not have been an unusual occurrence. The *Vajrasamādhi*'s associations with such an eminence as Wŏnhyo must also have been a plus in its favor. There is no unimpeachable evidence that the legends concerning Wŏnhyo's connection with the sūtra, which will be discussed in detail in the next chapter, developed before the tenth century. Nevertheless, the fact that Chih-sheng cites the text as "reconstructed" makes plausible the assumption that at least some elements of the legend were known to him. At any rate, Chih-sheng's bibliographical research suggested that a long-lost translated text had finally returned to circulation, apparently via a rare Korean recension; he remained oblivious to terminology in the text that could not have predated Kumārajīva, as well as to certain of its doctrinal elements, evocative of the *Awakening of Faith*, which were not current until the sixth century. For the author of the *Vajrasamādhi* it must also have been convenient to have a catalogue entry for an otherwise unknown sūtra, especially since the content of his composition would be readily adaptable to that title. Once the *K'ai-yüan lu* accepted the *Vajrasamādhi* as a translated sūtra, the text was thenceforth assured of remaining in the canon. The *Vajrasamādhi* had entered the mainstream of sinic Buddhism, from which it was never to recede.

⁶³ For example, important T'ien-t'ai texts were reintroduced into China (Wu Yüeh) by Ch'egwan (d. 971) in 961; see *Fo-tsu t'ung-chi* 10, T 2035.49.206a–b, ch. 43, pp. 294c–295a; discussed in Edmund H. Worthy, Jr., "Diplomacy for Survival: Domestic and Foreign Relations of Wu Yüeh, 907–978," p. 36, and noted p. 44 n. 121. Üich'ŏn traveled to the Sung kingdom in 1085, taking along several lost works by Chih-yen (602–668), Fa-tsang (643–712), and Ch'eng-kuan (738–840), and stimulating thereby the resurgence of Hua-yen thought in China; see discussion in Cho Myŏnggi, *Koryŏ Taegak kuksa wa Ch'ŏnt'ae sasang*, pp. 13–14; Kamata Shigeo, *Chōsen bukkyō no tera to rekishi*, pp. 203–204. Of course, this movement was reciprocal, and many lost Korean works were also reintroduced from China as well. For other textual exchanges between Sung China and Koryŏ Korea, see Kim Sanggi, "Song-tae e issōsō ūi Koryŏ-pon ūi yut'ong e tachayō," pp. 273–79.

Based on this evidence, it appears that, after centuries of obscurity, a *Vajrasamādhi-sūtra* began to circulate again in China sometime between 695 and 730. The big questions, of course, remain: from where? and under whose auspices? Apart from whatever inferences one can draw on the basis of textual evidence, the only extant information bearing on these questions appears in the hagiographies of Wǒnhyo, versions of which were written in both China and Korea. Wǒnhyo, who died in 686, wrote his commentary a minimum of nine years before the *Ta-Chou lu* entry stating that the *Vajrasamādhi* was still nonextant in China, and forty-four years before the sūtra's reappearance in Chinese catalogues in the *K'ai-yüan lu*. Based on such evidence as content, stylistic features, and textual citations, it is virtually indisputable that Wǒnhyo's commentary is authentic, and one must account for the fact that he obviously knew of the text several years before its reappearance in China. How was this possible? A number of interesting points concerning this question are raised in his hagiographies. The next chapter explores what these hagiographies might tell us about the provenance and dating of the *Vajrasamādhi*.

CHAPTER TWO

THE HAGIOGRAPHERS OF THE KOREAN SCHOLIAST WŎNHYO: THE DATING AND PROVENANCE OF THE *VAJRASAMĀDHI*

If there were one man who could be said to embody in his own life and career the highest ideals of the Korean Buddhist tradition it would have to be Wŏnhyo (617–686). Wŏnhyo is widely recognized as having made some of the most seminal contributions to the development of a distinctively Korean approach to Buddhist theology and practice. His range of scholarly endeavor covered the whole gamut of East Asian Buddhist materials, from the Flower Garland (Hwaŏm/Hua-yen) to Mere-Representation (Yusik/Wei-shih) to the Pure Land (Chŏngt'o/Ching-t'u) school, and the some one hundred works attributed to this prolific author find no rivals among his fellow Korean exegetes.¹ Over twenty works ascribed to him are still extant today, giving us a solid body of material upon which to base an examination of his contributions to Buddhist philosophy in Korea and, indeed, throughout East Asia. Erudition aside, Wŏnhyo also made a vigorous personal commitment to disseminating Buddhism throughout his country, helping make Buddhism the bedrock of Unified Silla culture. The destiny of Buddhism in Korea was so intertwined with Wŏnhyo's vocation that he can with little exaggeration be considered the exemplar par excellence of Korean Buddhism. But in addition to Wŏnhyo's intrinsic importance to that tradition,

¹ For a comprehensive listing of works attributed to Wŏnhyo, see Tongguk taehakkyo Pulgyo munhwa yŏn'guso, ed., *Han'guk Pulgyo ch'ansul munhŏn ch'ongnok*, pp. 16–37. Sung Bae Park ("Wŏnhyo's Commentaries on the *Awakening of Faith in Mahāyāna*," pp. 64–70), expanding on the listings in Cho Myŏnggi (*Silla Pulgyo ūi inyŏm kwa yŏksa*, pp. 97–102), has conveniently grouped 106 of Wŏnhyo's compositions into 15 textual categories. Cho Myŏnggi (*ibid.*, pp. 103–22) has also given a valuable summary of each of the 25 extant works attributed to Wŏnhyo. A one-thousand-page collection of secondary studies in Korean, Japanese, and English on all aspects of Wŏnhyo's life and thought has recently appeared as *Wŏnhyo yŏn'gu non-ch'ong: kŭ ch'ŏrhak kwa in'gan ūi modŭn kŏt*, ed. Kim Chigyŏn. The book was compiled for free distribution and is extremely difficult to procure.

he is also the one historical person that legend ties most intimately to the composition of the *Vajrasamādhi*. It is for this reason that a treatment of his hagiographies looms large here.

In comparison to the broad knowledge of Wŏnhyo's theological stance, which I shall cover in more detail in the following chapter, surprisingly little is known of the man himself and the personal factors that may have contributed to his philosophical development. As is inevitably the case for person-ages separated by such distances from our own time, distinguishing biographical fact from hagiographical fancy is no mean challenge. Especially for a person of Wŏnhyo's stature, the sheer mass of legendary materials is initially imposing, if not ultimately overwhelming. This problem is exacerbated by the self-effacing penchant of Wŏnhyo in his own works—hardly unexpected in exegetical writing—which allows little of his own life to emerge.

Fortunately, recent research has shown that virtually all of our knowledge of Wŏnhyo's life derive from two sources: the *Sung Kao-seng chuan* (Biographies of eminent monks compiled during the Sung; hereafter *SKSC*) and the Koryŏ-period *Samguk yusa* (Memorabilia and mirabilia of the three kingdoms; hereafter *SGYS*).² The only other source is *Kosŏn-sa Sŏdang hwasang t'appi* (Stūpa inscription to the *Upādhyāya* Sŏdang of Kosŏn-sa), a cenotaph dedicated to Wŏnhyo that was rediscovered in 1914 in a stream bed near the ancient Silla capital of Kyŏngju.³ This inscription would be extremely valuable were it not for its unfortunately fragmentary state. Even considering this disadvantage, its precise dating of Wŏnhyo's death and its mention of at least one of Wŏnhyo's works provide important corroboration for some of the statements appearing in the other biographies. While we must always

² Outlines of primary materials pertaining to Wŏnhyo's life can be found in Motoi Nobuo, "Shiragi Gangyō no denki ni tsuite," pp. 41–46; and Mizuno, pp. 39–41. Kim Yŏngt'ae has made an exhaustive study of primary sources and oral legends from the Kyŏngsang-do region relating to Wŏnhyo in his "Chŏn'gi wa sŏrhwa rŭl t'onghan Wŏnhyo yŏn'gu," pp. 33–76.

³ *Kosŏn-sa Sŏdang hwasang t'appi*, in *Wŏnhyo taesa chŏnjip*, ed. Cho Myŏnggi, pp. 661–63. For accounts of the rediscovery of the text see Motoi, "Gangyō," pp. 33–34, and see p. 41 for a summary of the earlier Japanese scholarship concerning this inscription, much of which is unavailable in this country; note also Yi Chongik, "Wŏnhyo ūi saengae wa sasang," p. 220; Sung Bae Park, "Wŏnhyo's Commentaries," p. 46. Additional fragments were recently discovered and published by Hwang Suyŏng, "Silla Sŏdang hwasang pi ūi sinp'yŏn," pp. 1–6. An illustrated account of the lives of Wŏnhyo and his contemporary and friend, Ūisang, depicting many of the events appearing in the biographies discussed herein, appears in the thirteenth-century Japanese illustrated scroll *Kegon engi emaki*; see Kameda Tsutomu, ed., *Kegon engi*. This scroll receives its most extensive treatment in any language in Karen Brock, "Tales of Gishō and Gangyō: Editor, Artist, and Audience in Japanese Picture Scrolls."

bear in mind that our view of Wŏnhyo and Silla Buddhism in *SKSC* and *SGYS* is reflected in a several-centuries-old speculum, there is independent confirmation for substantial portions of their accounts; indeed, both of their narratives reflect earlier accounts that, in several cases, probably do not far postdate Wŏnhyo's own lifetime.

An exhaustive treatment of Wŏnhyo's life would require considerably more space than would be relevant to the principal focus here on the *Vajrasamādhi*. Hence my overriding concern will instead be with the structure of, and topoi appearing in, the biographies themselves—that is, the way in which an eminent religious is treated by Buddhist biographers and the implications of the symbolism and imagery used therein, especially as these relate to the provenance of the *Vajrasamādhi*. At the same time, I shall examine any data suggested in the biographies that will help to clarify the major periods in Wŏnhyo's religious vocation. Wŏnhyo's central role in forging a distinctively Korean form of Buddhism accounts for why an examination of his life will help to illuminate something of the doctrinal outlook and social role of the Silla Buddhist ecclesia, offering some broad sense of the milieu within which the *Vajrasamādhi* may have been composed.

The *Sung Kao-seng chuan* Hagiography and the Provenance of the *Vajrasamādhi*

The *Sung Kao-seng chuan* was compiled under imperial auspices by Tsan-ning (919–1001), the noted historiographer and Ch'an polemicist, between 982 and 988.⁴ Its biography of Wŏnhyo, which draws heavily upon conventional biographical elements in presenting a stereotyped characterization of a religious figure, is a quintessential example of East Asian Buddhist hagiography.⁵ Couched in thaumaturgy and theurgy, Buddhist hagiography was

⁴ Tsan-ning's biography and writings are discussed in Chou Yi-liang, "Tantrism in China," pp. 248–51. His career receives a detailed treatment in Albert A. Dalia, "The 'Political Career' of the Buddhist Historian Tsan-ning," pp. 146–80. The *Sung Kao-seng chuan* has been summarized by Chan Hing-ho ("Ta Sung Kao-seng chuan," pp. 349–50). Tsan-ning's contribution to Buddhist historiography has been treated in Jan Yün-hua, "Buddhist Historiography in Sung China," pp. 362–64.

⁵ Tsan-ning's account appears in *T'ang Hsin-lo-kuo Huang-lung-ssu Yüan-hsiao chuan* (Biography of Wŏnhyo [Break of Dawn] of Hwangnyong-sa [Yellow Dragon Monastery] in the T'ang Dominion of Silla), in *SKSC* 4, T 2061.50.730a6–b29. I have made a complete, annotated translation of the biography in my article "The Biographies of the Korean Monk Wŏnhyo." For general treatments of Buddhist hagiography in China and Korea, see Arthur F.

designed for the edification of the faithful and the proselytization of the unconverted, not the imparting of biographical fact. Hagiography was ultimately a composite of a number of conflicting sentiments toward the subject, each of which had its own peculiar concerns: the life of the person himself, the retained memories of him within the religious community, and his value as a personification of certain spiritual ideals, cultural symbols, or religious accomplishments. The paradigmatic elements present in sacred biography tend to interfere with attempts to reconstruct historically the “facts” about important spiritual figures.

The *Sung Kao-seng chuan* is best treated as a successor to the Chinese Buddhist hagiographical tradition that started with Hui-chiao (497–554), in which Buddhist biography was written to acculturate Buddhists and Buddhist ecclesiastical institutions to the indigenous civilization.⁶ This feature will be seen explicitly in what I hope to show is the major theme of SKSC’s biography of Wŏnhyo: the scriptural authenticity of the *Vajrasamādhi*. Wŏnhyo’s biography appears in the second section of the work on “Doctrinal Exegetes” (*i-chieh*),⁷ together with a number of other Korean scholiasts who played important roles in the development of the learned schools of sinic Buddhism.

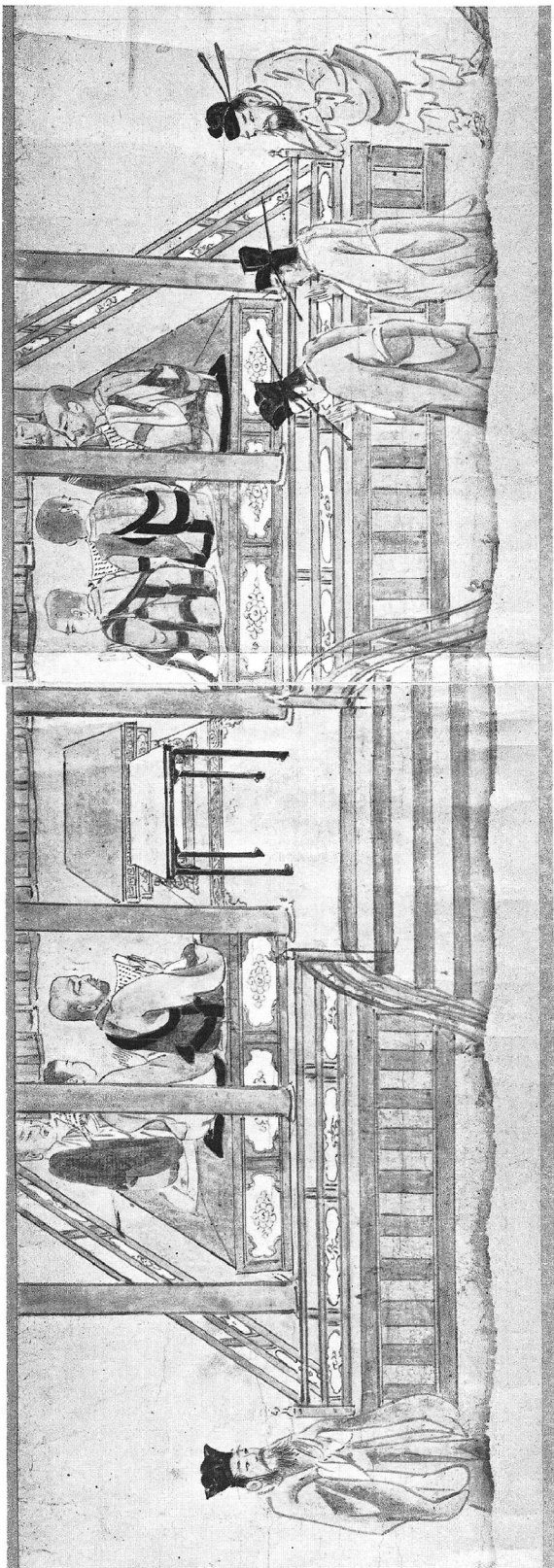
Tsan-ning’s account opens with a few stereotyped encomiums about Wŏnhyo’s scholarly prowess before turning to a controversy among Wŏnhyo’s peers concerning his participation in a *Jen-wang ching/Inwang-kyŏng* (Book of benevolent kings) convocation, a sūtra-recitation ceremony that was periodically convened during the Silla and Koryŏ dynasties for the protection of the kingdom.⁸ Despite the opposition of the other elders, the Silla

Wright, “Biography and Hagiography: Hui-chiao’s *Lives of Eminent Monks*,” pp. 383–432, especially pp. 384–87; Jan Yün-hua, “Hui Chiao and His Works, a Reassessment,” pp. 177–90; and Peter H. Lee, trans., *Lives of Eminent Korean Monks*, introduction. For the biographical genre in Chinese literature as a whole, see Denis Twitchett, “Problems of Chinese Biography,” pp. 24–39, and Arthur F. Wright, “Values, Roles, and Personalities,” esp. pp. 9–15.

⁶ See discussion in Wright, “Biography and Hagiography,” p. 385.

⁷ See Tsan-ning’s definition of the “doctrinal exegetes” category at SKSC, T 2061.50.710a.

⁸ The “Hu-kuo p’in” (Protecting the kingdom chapter) of the *Jen-wang po-jo po-lo-mi ching* (T 246.8.840a11–19) stipulates that whenever a country is faced with danger, one hundred images and one hundred seats are to be prepared, and monks of an equal number are to be invited to recite and expound upon this sūtra; see Chou Yi-liang, “Tantrism in China,” p. 296 n. 61; Hong Yunsik, “Koryŏ Pulgyo ūi sinang ūrye,” p. 664. See also Yoritomi Motohiro, “Gokoku kyōten to iwareru mono: *Ninnōkyō* o megutte,” pp. 45–62; Ninomiya Keimin, “Chōsen ni okeru Ninnōkai no kaisetsu,” pp. 155–63; Roger Leverrier, “Étude sur les rites bouddhiques à l’époque du royaume de Koryŏ,” pp. 61–72; and Buswell, *Korean Approach*, pp. 2, 71 n. 1, and 80 n. 85, for other references. For national-protection Buddhism and the central role of such



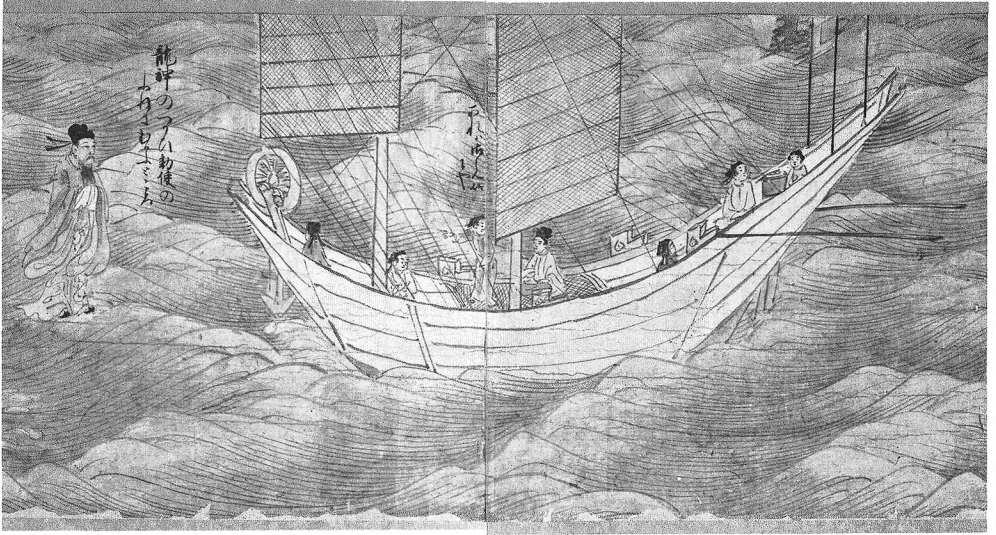
1. The *Jen-wang ching* convocation



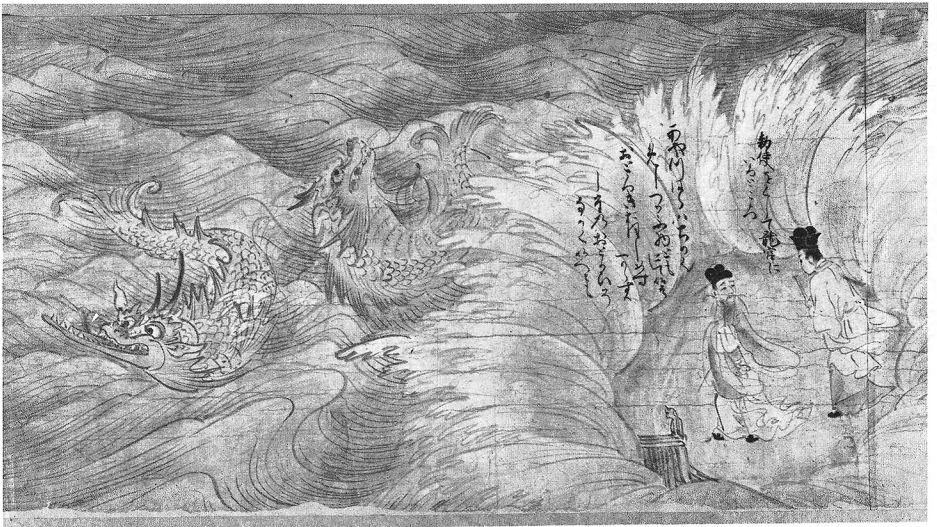
2. Illness of the queen-consort



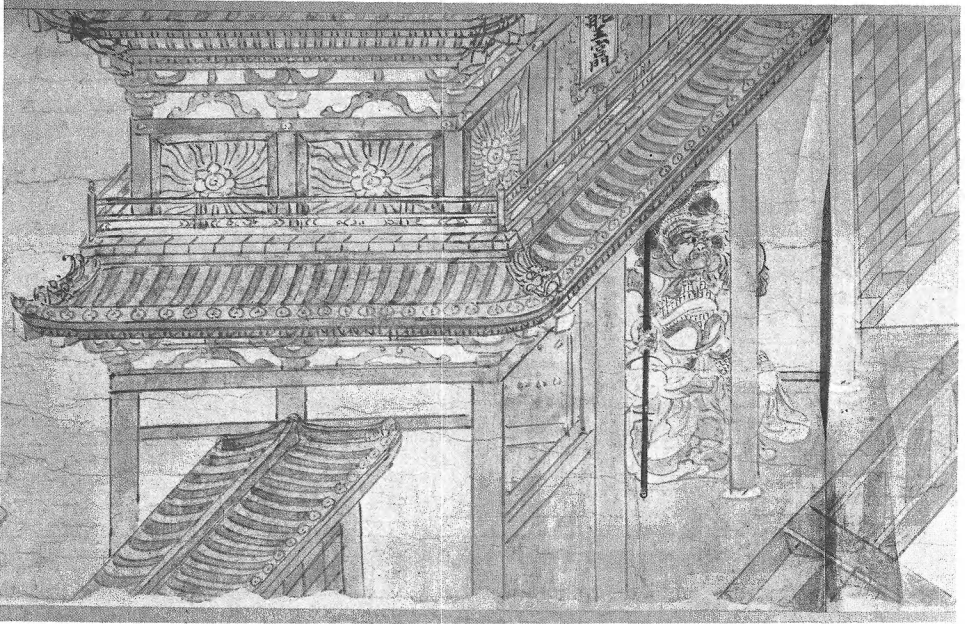
3. The Silla envoy is dispatched to T'ang China



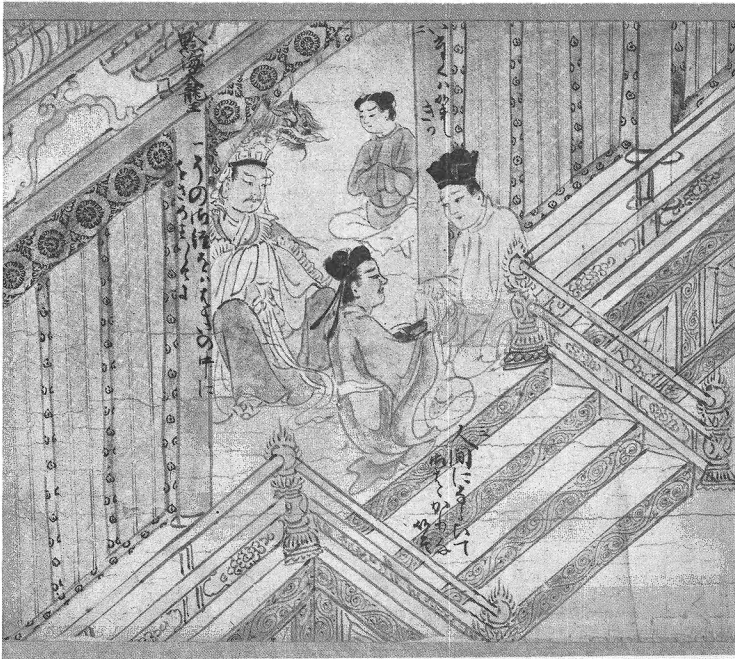
4. A gaffer appears amid the waves



5. The envoy is escorted to the Dragon King's palace



6. The gate to the Dragon King's palace



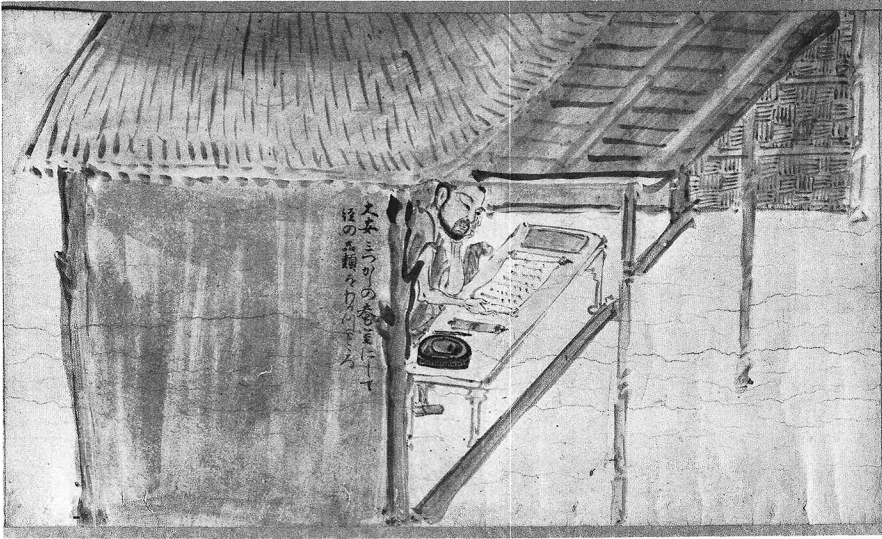
7. Receiving the *Vajrasamādhi* from the Dragon King



8. Searching for Taean in the marketplace



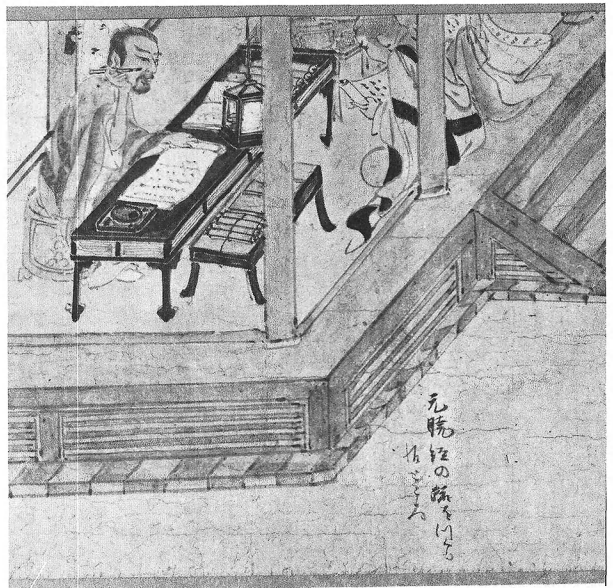
9. Taean receives the *Vajrasamādhi*



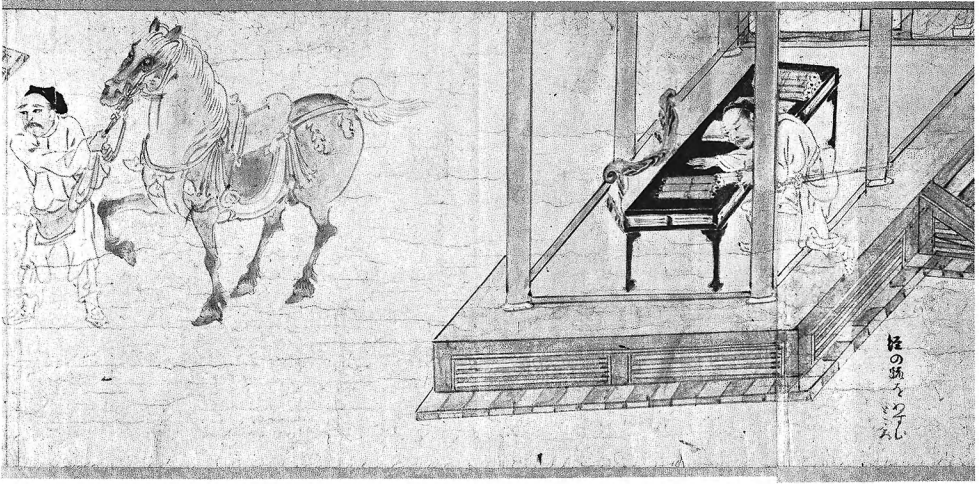
10. Taean collates the text of the *Vajrasamādhi*



11. The newly collated *Vajrasamādhi* is delivered to the Silla palace



12. Wōnhyo writes his commentary to the *Vajrasamādhi*



13. Lackeys steal Wŏnhyo's commentary



14. Wŏnhyo rewrites his commentary



15. Wŏnhyo lectures on the *Vajrasamādhi*

king (who is unidentified) orders that Wŏnhyo be allowed to join. Sometime later, his queen-consort is stricken with a mysterious illness, which shamans say can be cured only if medicine is brought from overseas. An envoy is immediately dispatched to T'ang China; but while he is still en route across the sea an old man suddenly appears from out of the waves and leads him to the Dragon King's palace, where he has an audience with the king himself. The Dragon King informs the envoy that the illness of the Silla queen was merely a pretext to allow a previously unknown sūtra, the *Vajrasamādhi*, to be introduced to, and disseminated in, Korea. The king commands that, upon the envoy's return to Silla, the thirty-odd uncollated folios of the sūtra are to be put in order by the siddha Tæan and expounded upon by Wŏnhyo. To ensure the scripture's safe return to Silla, the pages are wrapped in waxed paper and hidden inside the envoy's thigh.

Escorted back to the surface of the sea, the envoy reboards his ship and returns home, where he informs the Silla king of his miraculous journey. The king orders Tæan to arrange the folios and sew them together into a bound volume, but Tæan refuses to "cross the threshold of the royal palace," accepting the text only after it is brought to his own residence. Once Tæan has completed the editing, Wŏnhyo is then commanded to write a commentary to the restored text and lecture on it at Hwangnyong-sa. However, just before Wŏnhyo's presentation, "menial lackeys" of his learned antagonists steal the newly written commentary. Delaying his lecture for three days, Wŏnhyo summarizes his exegesis in a shorter, three-fascicle version, called the "abbreviated commentary" (*lüeh-shu*; Kor. *yakso*). Before a large assembly, Wŏnhyo finally delivers his lecture, his erudition and wisdom humbling his previous opponents. (These events are illustrated in the thirteenth-century Japanese scroll *Kegon engi emaki* [Illustrated scroll of the history of the Kegon school]. See the photo insert.) Tsan-ning reports that both of these commentaries were still in circulation in Korea, but only the abbreviated version had been transmitted to China.⁹ This latter exegesis was so

apocryphal sūtras as *Jen-wang ching* in its development, see Mochizuki Shinkō, *Bukkyō kyōten seiritsu shiron*, pp. 425–85; Rhi Ki-yong, "Inwang panya-kyōng kwa hoguk Pulgyo," pp. 163–93.

⁹ There is no evidence that the longer, "expanded" commentary was ever written; see my article "Did Wŏnhyo Write Two Versions of His *Kūmgang sammaegyōng-ron*?" The style of *KSGR* may have contributed to suspicions that there had at one time been a longer version of the treatise. Frequently in *KSGR*, Wŏnhyo abbreviates his treatment, referring the reader instead to other of his works for full explication. (This is, of course, an indication that *KSGR* postdates most of his other works, as I shall explore later.) In several spots as well, the commentary provides little more than the basic structure of his argument. This is somewhat un-

highly regarded by the Chinese that a Trepitaka¹⁰ (a “master of the canon”) eventually changed its appellation from a “commentary” (*shu*; Kor. *so*) to an “exposition” (*lun*; Kor. *non*),¹¹ placing the composition on a par with *sāstras* written by the bodhisattva-exegetes of India.

Even a cursory perusal of this Chinese version of Wōnhyo’s biography suggests that attempts to ascertain biographical data about Wōnhyo from it will likely prove disappointing. There is very little in Tsan-ning’s account that can be considered to refer to Wōnhyo the man. One cannot track down any information about Wōnhyo’s alleged acquaintance Taean, or even about a *Jen-wang ching* assembly that might have taken place during a time-frame to be relevant to this tale.¹² Wōnhyo’s life is constructed almost entirely of stereotypical biographical images drawn from the larger Sino-Indian Buddhist tradition. In the process the subject is spiritualized to such an extent

sual, given the penchant for detail that Wōnhyo displays in major works like his commentary and autocommentary to the *Awakening of Faith*.

¹⁰ The most probable candidate for this Trepitaka is the third Hua-yen patriarch Fa-tsang (643–712), who was widely referred to as *fan-ching ta-teh*, as his biography notes (*T’ang Ta-chien-fu-ssu ku-ssu-chu fan-ching ta-teh Fa-tsang ho-shang chuang*, T 2054.50.280c17). Fa-tsang is well known to have been familiar with Wōnhyo’s work and to have held him in great respect.

¹¹ The term *lun* (exposition) was generally reserved by Chinese translators for independent treatises and expositions presumed written by Indian bodhisattva-masters; translated from Sanskrit, such texts were accorded canonical status on a par with the scriptures attributed to the Buddha himself. Indigenous treatises on translated sūtras were usually given the appellation *shu* (Kor. *so*), “commentary,” and had only semicanonical status. (It was the Korean cataloguer, Ŭich’ōn, who first insisted on including such “commentaries” in the *tripitaka*.) Hence, conferring such a designation would have been equivalent to placing Wōnhyo on a par with the bodhisattva-exegetes in the heartland of Buddhism—obviously a high honor. See also discussion in Kim Yōngt’ae, “Wōnhyo yōn’gu,” p. 31. Robert Shih’s statement (*Biographies des moines éminents [Kao seng tchouan] de Houei-kiao*, p. 169) concerning the *Liang Kao-seng chuan* that *lun* refers to a Chinese composition is not necessarily valid for later texts; indeed, many of the interpretations of terms given by Shih in the appendix to his book do not pertain in post sixth-century materials.

¹² Chronologically, this *Jen-wang ching/Inwang-kyōng* assembly would have to have occurred during the reign of either King Munmu (r. 661–681) or King Sinmun (r. 681–691). There is no solid evidence linking either of these two rulers, or anyone else for that matter, with the events depicted in this legend. Rhi Ki-yong (“*Inwang panya-kyōng kwa hoguk Pulgyo*,” p. 185) also notes that the date is unknown. Such national protection assemblies, which commonly used either *Jen-wang ching* or *Suvarṇaprabhāsottama-sūtra* (*Chin-kuang-ming ching*, T 664, T 665), were relatively common during the Silla period and virtually ubiquitous by the Koryō. None of the years during which such assemblies are recorded to have occurred, unfortunately, is within a range relevant to Wōnhyo’s life, and there are no other references to Korean *Inwang-kyōng* assemblies in a *Kao-seng chuan* or a Korean historical record that might provide additional clues. Lacking any further evidence, one can only assume that the legend here extrapolates from other stories. For the dates of Silla national-protection ceremonies, see Kim Yōngt’ae, “Silla Pulgyo sasang,” pp. 113–15, and the annotation to my translation of Wōnhyo’s *SKSC* biography in “The Biographies of the Korean Monk Wōnhyo.”

that he is nearly dehumanized.¹³ Expunged almost entirely is any semblance of the qualities that bring Wŏnhyo to life and reveal his basic humanity. We have here little more than generic biography, which is employed by Tsan-ning as a means of presenting the main concern of his account: the authentication of the *Vajrasamādhi*. It is this focus that apparently justifies Tsan-ning's inclusion of Wŏnhyo in his chapters on doctrinal exegetes (*i-chieh*), since the events related seem more appropriate to the theurgist (*shen-i*) sections instead. In this overriding concern to legitimize the *Vajrasamādhi*, Wŏnhyo becomes a tool of the mythology, and any sense of him as an individual is all but lost. Such problems demand that this hagiography be approached as mythology or folklore and its significance examined in light of the indigenous culture and worldview. From such perspectives, however, the biography is rich with information, which will provide much that is relevant to ascertaining the provenance of the *Vajrasamādhi*.

Tsan-ning's story is unswerving in its focus on a single concern: the discovery of the *Vajrasamādhi*. Like much of folk literature, Tsan-ning's biography is "single-stranded," in that it makes no attempt to combine different stories and episodes into the complex narratives of more sophisticated fictional writing.¹⁴ The structure of the biography itself also follows Axel Olrik's law governing folk tales of "Two to a Scene,"¹⁵ in which no more than two characters will appear at a time in any one episode. Such pairs recur throughout the story: the king and the envoy he sends to T'ang, the envoy's meeting with the gaffer and, later, his audience with the Dragon King, Wŏnhyo's contact with the messenger, and so on. Wŏnhyo is brought into the story merely to serve as a vehicle for telling the tale of the recovery of the *Vajrasamādhi* from the depths of the Dragon King's palace. Since Wŏnhyo wrote the first commentary to the *Vajrasamādhi*, it is no surprise that he comes to be associated with the reappearance of the text. But Wŏnhyo was apparently also sufficiently notorious in Korea, and perhaps throughout East Asia, as to afford a convenient peg upon which to hang the myth of the discovery of the *Vajrasamādhi*.¹⁶

Rather than biographical fact, what one finds instead is a plethora of folkloric topoi, deriving from Korean, Chinese, and Indian sources. The sickness of a female member of the royal family, which prompted the trip leading to the discovery of the *Vajrasamādhi*, is a common motif found in East

¹³ See discussion in Reynolds and Capps, *The Biographical Process*, p. 3.

¹⁴ See Axel Olrik, "Epic Laws of Folk Narrative," p. 137.

¹⁵ Olrik, "Folk Narrative," pp. 134–35.

¹⁶ Paraphrasing Lord Raglan's comments about why certain figures come to be associated with heroic events; see his *The Hero: A Study in Tradition, Myth, and Drama*, p. 214.

Asian miracle tales and figures prominently in Korean sources like *Samguk yusa*. Iryŏn, for example, tells the story of the mythic Ado *hwasang*, one of the first Koguryŏ missionaries to Silla, who is said to have cured the illness of one of King Mich'u's (r. 262–283) daughters in 264. Mukhoja, another early missionary in Silla, is claimed to have cured the illness of a princess of King Pŏphŭng in 528. *Samguk yusa* also includes the tale of a daughter of King Hyoso (r. 692–701), who, just a few years after Wŏnhyo's death, was stricken with an incurable illness that was healed only by the spells of the Tantric thaumaturge Hyet'ong (d.u.). During the same period in China, the Tantric master and translator Vajrabodhi (671–741) is said to have cured a similarly terminal illness that had afflicted the twenty-fifth daughter of Emperor Hsüan-tsung (r. 712–756).¹⁷ Such convenient illnesses have parallels with the sicknesses often associated with shamanistic rebirth, which occur just prior to the reception of supernatural understanding.

Ko Ikchin has also suggested that one of the principal thrusts of Silla Buddhist ideology was to replace the indigenous shamanistic worldview, in which nature dominated humankind, with its Buddhist counterpart, in which man dominated nature.¹⁸ The ineffectiveness of the native shamans in curing the illness of the queen-consort—while this Buddhist “talisman,” a secret *sūtra*, succeeds—may adumbrate the entrenchment of Buddhism in the religious life of Silla and Shamanism's displacement from a position of political influence.

The thigh as a secret hiding place is a topos that appears frequently in Indian folklore and mythology.¹⁹ Most often the thigh is cut open with a

¹⁷ For the story of Mukhoja, see *Samguk sagi* 4, p. 78; SGYS 3, T 2039.49.986b7, hereafter cited only by page and column; and *Haedong kosŭng-chŏn*, T 2065.50.1017c–1018a (Peter H. Lee, trans., *Lives of Eminent Korean Monks*, pp. 49–56). For Ado *hwasang*, see SGYS 3, p. 986c1–3; and *Haedong kosŭng-chŏn*, T 2065.50.1017c–1018c (Lee, trans., pp. 49–56). For the thaumaturge Hyet'ong, see SGYS 5, pp. 1010c–1011b for the whole story, and specifically p. 1011a15 for reference to her illness; noted also in Inoue, “Chōsen bukkyō juyō,” pp. 63–64. Hyet'ong was said to have been associated with Shan-wu-wei (Subhakarasiṃha; 637–735), the renowned esoteric master in China, who is also said to have traveled to the Dragon Palace, but from the deserts of Turfan no less! (SKSC 2, T 2061.50.715a; translated in Chou Yi-liang, “Tantrism in China,” p. 262). Vajrabodhi's story appears in his biography in SKSC 1, T 2061.50.711b–712a, translated in Chou Yi-liang, “Tantrism,” pp. 278–79. Other similar Korean stories are translated in *Korean Folk Tales*, ed. Chun Shin-yong. See especially “Bride's Island,” where the illness of a spouse is said to be curable by a magical herb that grows only on a distant island (pp. 42–43; story analyzed on pp. 14–15); and “Princess Bari,” where the king and queen become mysteriously ill and can only be cured by magical water from the Heavenly Kingdom (p. 100; analyzed p. 19).

¹⁸ Ko Ikchin, “Han'guk kodae ūi Pulgyo sasang,” pp. 68–100.

¹⁹ The thigh as a hiding place is listed as motif F1052 in Stith Thompson and Jonas Balys, *Oral Tales of India*.

knife and the item to be hidden sewn inside, with unguents applied or spells recited to restore the thigh to its original condition. Oral tales using his motif abound, as when a messenger hides a gift bottle of liquor inside his thigh.²⁰ Kota stories include a story of a woman hiding a sari inside the thigh, sewing it up, and then reciting a few spells to make it look as if nothing had happened.²¹

The theft of a sacred book—as one finds when Wŏnhyo’s first commentary to the *Vajrasamādhī* is stolen by “lackeys” of his jealous rivals—is another common motif in Buddhist folklore, which is often used as a means of testing the resolve or understanding of the writer. According to Pali tradition, for example, Buddhaghosa’s magnum opus, *Visuddhimagga* (Path of purification), was stolen twice by the King of the Gods, Sakka. By checking the final draft against the first two versions, Sakka was able to verify Buddhaghosa’s complete consistency as an author and, by extension, the unimpeachableness of Sinhalese religious writings.²² Even though the thieves in our story hardly have the same prestige as Sakka, their theft of his commentary to the *Vajrasamādhī* does present a similar type of test for Wŏnhyo. Here, however, the tale attests to Wŏnhyo’s perseverance in the face of persecution and his determination to ensure that the message of the sūtra would not be lost.

But it is the larger structure of the SKSC story that reveals its true character as “monomyth,” a universal pattern in sacred biography. Traditional biography is often used as a vehicle to explicate the mythic trials of heroic types, generally through three major stages: the separation of the subject from his community, his isolation and incumbent tribulations, and his eventual reinstatement in the community, often at a superior status.²³ In our story, Wŏnhyo’s disenfranchisement from his community takes place at the time of the *Inwang-kyŏng* assembly. After undergoing successive struggles and adventures among the people—as in the Korean version of the story—

²⁰ Verrier Elwin, *Myths of Middle India*, p. 436.

²¹ Story no. 23 in Murray B. Emeneau, *Kota Texts: Part Three*, and see the schematic analysis of the motif on p. 369.

²² See Stanley Tambiah, *The Buddhist Saints of the Forest and the Cult of Amulets*, pp. 28–29.

²³ Joseph Campbell’s description of “monomyth” (*The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, pp. 36ff) is one piece of his work that has withstood scholarly investigation; note the comments about the “sophisticated form” of Campbell’s arguments and their universal applicability in Clyde Kluckhohn, “Recurrent Themes in Myths and Mythmaking,” p. 167; see also the discussion in Reynolds and Capps, *The Biographical Process*, p. 17. For the heroic pattern in a Western cultural context, see Lord Raglan, *The Hero*, esp. pp. 174–75 for the twenty-two stages of this pattern in Greek and Roman mythology. For the related aretalogical pattern, see Hadas and Smith, *Heroes and Gods*, pp. 17–26.

he is called upon through supernatural intervention to work on a commentary to the *Vajrasamādhi*. The king appoints Wōnhyo to lecture on the sūtra before a great assembly of Buddhists; his reputation redeemed, his previous opponents express contrition at their earlier hostility. Finally, Wōnhyo exults in his redemption and publicly chides his earlier rivals.

What were the motives that might have prompted the creation of this story about Wōnhyo and the *Vajrasamādhi*, which eventually found its way into Tsan-ning's account? As I have noted, Wōnhyo himself all but vanishes in the weaving of the tale. But disregarding the theurgic aspects of the hagiography, a number of important clues about the sūtra's own origins are visible just beneath the surface.

Perhaps the most striking feature of the legend is the intimate association between Korea and the *Vajrasamādhi* from the moment of its "reappearance" in the world of humans. In Tsan-ning's version, an envoy from Korea first receives the text in scattered folios; an otherwise unknown Korean monk, Taean, is ordered to edit the text; the eminent Korean scholiast Wōnhyo is commanded to popularize the text by writing a commentary on it. Wōnhyo's role in disseminating the newly recovered sūtra is obviously central. The Dragon King decrees that it is Wōnhyo who is to write a commentary to the sūtra and certifies that the text and its commentary will be a medicine (read: scripture) that can cure even the incurable. Here are obvious indications both of the importance of the *Vajrasamādhi* in Korea and of the major role Wōnhyo's commentary to it was to play in Korean Buddhism. Significantly, neither China nor Chinese monks figure anywhere in this story: the sūtra is revealed through the direct intervention of the Dragon King before the Silla envoy is able even to reach the mainland. From the moment of its introduction, then, the *Vajrasamādhi* was addressed to at least an East Asian, if not a specifically Korean, audience. I do not believe, as Mizuno Kōgen has suggested,²⁴ that the role of the Dragon King in this legend requires that we go as far afield as Shan-tung or Liao-tung to locate the provenance of the text. Instead, it seems much more plausible that Tsan-ning testifies here that the text first "reappeared" (read: was first authored) in Korea through the instigation of Koreans. And Tsan-ning also gives us the opinion current at the time that the spiritual efficacy of the text these Koreans created surpassed all worldly products—hence, his statement that "the efficacy of the *agada* panacea of the Snowy Mountains [the Himalayas] does not surpass this [sūtra]."²⁵

²⁴ Mizuno, p. 40.

²⁵ SKSC 4, T 2061.50.730b3–4.

In adopting the motif of the recovery of the sūtra from the scriptural repository of the Dragon King, the legend's author is drawing on two distinct stories: first, tales that circulated on the Indian subcontinent and thence throughout Asia concerning the recovery of the Mahāyāna scriptures from the Dragon Palace by Nāgārjuna (fl. ca. A.D. 150); and second, legends dating from the inception of Buddhism in Silla concerning the place of dragon and snake cults in the life of the people of the southeastern region of the peninsula.

The adoption of the dragon-palace motif is, from this first standpoint, an attempt to bring Korea into the fold of Buddhist macroculture, which was universally familiar with the legends of the recovery of Buddhist scriptures from the dragon palace.²⁶ One of the principal reasons for the telling of myth is as an "escape" from geographical or cultural isolation.²⁷ By demonstrating Korean contact with this palace, peninsular civilization, was defined at least partially in terms of mainstream continental beliefs.

According to Chinese sailor's tradition, the Dragon King's palace was situated under a small island, located five to six days' journey east from Su-chou in Kiangsu province. Very high waves pounded the island so that no vessel could approach, but at high tide the island was inundated by water so that ships could pass. At night an eery red light shone above the spot to warn sailors away.²⁸

²⁶ This would parallel the attempt to associate Korea with the Indian emperor Aśoka's establishment of stūpas throughout Asia; see Buswell, *Korean Approach*, pp. 72–73 n. 11.

²⁷ Cf. discussion in William R. Bascom, "Four Functions of Folklore," p. 290; and Wm. Hugh Jansen, "The Esoteric-Exoteric Factor in Folklore," p. 46.

²⁸ See M. W. de Visser, *The Dragon in China and Japan*, pp. 1–34; and Kondō Haruo, *Tōdai shōsetsu no kenkyū*, pp. 99–114, for a description of the dragon palace. The legend of the Dragon King (Nāgarāja) and his scriptural repository is also discussed in Edward Conze, *Buddhism: Its Essence and Development*, p. 124. Shizutani Masao, "Indo bukkyōshi to Nāga (tatsu)," pp. 131–46, also discusses the Indian background of Nāgas. For a traditional account of dragon faith and the dragon palace, see *Fan-i ming-i chi* 7, T 2131.54.1065c14–1066a1; and see Inoue, "Chōsen bukkyō juyō," p. 56. Chinese materials on ophidian worship are translated in Samuel Beal, *A Catena of Buddhist Scriptures from the Chinese*, pp. 415–23; E. T. C. Werner, *Myths and Legends of China*, pp. 210–17; Wolfram Eberhard, ed., *Folktales of China*, pp. 98–100, 151–56. Gisbert Combaz ("Masques et dragons en Asie," pp. 172–205) discusses the literature and symbolism of dragons in China; for dragon symbolism, see also Heinrich Zimmer, *Myths and Symbols in Indian Art and Civilization*, pp. 59–68. Tatsuzawa Toshiaki, "Chūgoku minzoku to ryūda no denshō," pp. 81–106, discusses the place of dragons in Chinese culture. Perhaps the most exhaustive treatment of ophidian worship and symbols appears in Balaji Mundkur, *The Cult of the Serpent: An Interdisciplinary Survey of Its Manifestations and Origins*, and see esp. p. 105 for China.

It is somewhat surprising that none of the East Asian recensions of such Dragon King stories predate the T'ang: there are no references to the dragon palace in the *Kao-seng chuan* of the

Korean associations with the Dragon King were many and varied. The monk Myōngnang (d.u.), who was an acquaintance of Wōnhyo, traveled to China in 632 and was invited to the Dragon King's palace during his return voyage in 635. His experience proved invaluable in the years following the fall of Paekche and Koguryō to the combined Silla and T'ang armies, when continued T'ang pressure to bring Silla under its dominion threatened the Korean kingdom's newly won independence. Through the intercession of Wōnhyo's close friend Ŭisang, then studying in China under Chih-yen (602–668), the proposed T'ang plan for a massive sea invasion of Korea was made known in 670 to King Munmu (r. 661–680), the very same king who is later said to become a dragon protector himself. The king called a convocation of his vassals, who reported to the throne that Myōngnang had recently returned from the dragon palace with esoteric spells. Myōngnang was called in to advise the king and, thanks to his intercession, the T'ang invasion force was sunk by a typhoon.

After Ŭisang had returned to Korea and was in retreat in a cave near Naksan along the eastern seacoast, he is said to have received a “wish-fulfilling” (*cintāmaṇi*) gem from the Dragon of the Eastern Sea. In commemoration of the miracle, Ŭisang later built Naksan-sa on the mountain above the site, where Wōnhyo is also reputed to have practiced.

During the reign of King Sōngdōk (r. 702–736), one generation after Wōnhyo, Queen Suro visited the Dragon of the Eastern Sea, who had first appeared to her the day before as a gaffer. This relationship between Korea and the Dragon King is also noted in the later story of Poyang, who is said to have lived in the tenth century. Poyang was returning to Silla from China when the Dragon King of the Western Sea waylaid him and invited him to his palace. The Dragon King's son, Imok, accompanied Poyang back to Silla, where they played instrumental roles in the founding of the Koryō state.

This pervasive role of dragons in Korean folk tales is found also in Buddhist-influenced vernacular literature written in the native Korean orthography, *han'gŭl*. There are, for instance, many stories of filial sons who traveled to the dragon palace on their way to western China to get medicine for their ailing mothers or returned from an audience with the Dragon King with a wish-fulfilling gem that could benefit the masses. Hence, Koreans enthusiastically embraced this motif in many different strata of their litera-

Liang, only a handful in the *Hsü Kao-seng chuan* of the T'ang, while several appear in *SKSC*, including the story in this biography.

ture, in order to authenticate a variety of momentous events in the life of the nation.²⁹

In addition to its obvious value in legitimating Korean pretensions to continental culture, however, this reference to the dragon palace legend would have served also to assuage Chinese doubts about the authenticity of the scripture. Such doubts could have been a major concern for the Koreans who must have introduced the sūtra to the mainland. Chinese skepticism would be alleviated through telling an explanatory tale validating the origins of the sūtra—authentication being one of the major forces behind the creation of myth.³⁰ Some aspects of the legend might well have been created with potential Chinese critics in mind. In China, the text of the *Vajrasamādhi* had not circulated for at least eight decades, and probably not since the time of Tao-an, fully five hundred years before. Wŏnhyo, although respected by his Chinese contemporaries in the nascent Hua-yen school, could very well have been challenged for this commentary, as interesting as it might have been: where had he obtained this text, unexpectedly reappearing after all those years in limbo? The Koreans bringing the scripture to China would have been hard-pressed for an answer. How better to deflect such controversy than to bring in the Dragon King—the figure so central to the appearance of the Indian Mahāyāna texts—through whose intercession the scripture was placed back in circulation and upon whose command Wŏnhyo was compelled to write his commentary? There would have been few easier ways to authenticate for East Asians a newly “discovered” scripture with canonical pretensions, as well as to nip in the bud whatever criticism might have been forthcoming about its human origins. Legends about mythic personages from inaccessible lands are difficult either to verify or to discount, and the Chinese rarely hesitated to accept such miracles of the faith. Especially for a lover of thaumaturgy like Tsan-ning,³¹ this must have seemed a re-

²⁹ For Myŏngnang’s associations with the Dragon King, see SGYS 2, p. 972b1–2, and SGYS 5, p. 1011a26–7; SGYS 5, 1011b7–c9; for his role in defeating the T’ang armies, see SGYS 2, p. 972b1–9. Ŭisang’s contacts with the Dragon of the Eastern Sea are treated in SGYS 3, p. 996c2–14. Suro’s visit to the same dragon is related in SGYS 2, p. 974a. For Poyang, see SGYS 4, p. 1003b–1004a; noted by Peter Lee, *Lives*, p. 77 n. 378. A summary of all the contacts between Korean monks and the Dragon King found in SGYS is given in Kim Yŏngt’ae, “Silla Pulgyo e issŏsŏ ŭi yongsin sasang,” pp. 123–29. For the Dragon King in *han’gŭl* secular literature, see In Kwŏn-hwan, “Buddhist Preachings and their Korean Acculturation,” p. 23. Translations of Korean stories about the Dragon King and his palace appear in Zŏng In-sŏb, *Folk Tales from Korea*, pp. 25–29, 103–105, 169–71.

³⁰ Note Bascom’s comments (“Four Functions of Folklore,” p. 292): “When . . . skepticism of an accepted pattern is expressed or doubts about it arise, whether it be sacred or secular, there is usually a myth or legend to validate it.”

³¹ Tsan-ning’s interest in thaumaturgy is perhaps the major difference between SKSC and

markable tale, which more than accounted for any suspicions latent among the Chinese about the authenticity of this Korean recension.

Second, and even more provocatively, several elements in this legend strongly suggest that it was framed by its tellers with specifically Korean concerns in mind: in particular, to expedite the acceptance of the *Vajrasamādhi* in Silla by associating the story of its discovery with indigenous Korean ophidian cults. As the protective deities of water, snakes were common objects of worship in primitive agricultural societies, as of course was Silla in the centuries prior to Buddhism's official acceptance during King Pōphūng's reign. In China and northern Asia, dragons were also associated with water, and the thunder that was the precursor of storms represented the ferocious power of dragons.³² As Silla embraced the alien cultures on its frontiers, its indigenous snake cults were eventually projected onto the dragon cults of China and northern Asia.³³ Dragons then came to be endowed with all of the power attributed indigenously to snakes, but considerably magnified in intensity and scope.³⁴

Silla also knew of yellow dragons (*hwangnyong*), originally regional autochthonous deities, which also came to be associated with the snake gods of the water, becoming in the process protectors of both soil and water. Because of their affinities with foreign dragon cults and indigenous snake cults, yellow dragons came to be one of the most important popular deities in Silla, and their affiliations with Buddhism occur early on, in a story concerning the founding of Hwangnyong-sa,³⁵ the monastery where Wōnhyo

its Chinese predecessors. This interest is attested by the fact that over 17 percent of the total biographies and one-third of the classified biographies in *SKSC* are of miracle-workers; see Yanagida Seizan, *Shoki Zenshū shisho no kenkyū*, p. 11 n. 10, noted by Whalen Lai, "T'an-ch'ien and the Early Ch'an Tradition," p. 66. Stanley Weinstein ("A Biographical Study of Tz'u-en," p. 147) has also contrasted the "absurdities" that clutter *SKSC* with the "far more conscientious Liang and T'ang Biographies of Eminent Priests."

³² In China and northern Asia, thunder was considered to be indicative of the ferocious powers of dragons; see discussion in de Visser, *Dragon*, p. 42. De Visser also notes (p. 109) that dragons principally represented thunder but occasionally were considered to be water-spirits, like snakes. Dragons were associated both with storm and lightning and with wells and water in references from the Three Kingdoms period; see the passages collected in "Yongō i" (Oddities on dragons and fish) in *Munhōn pigo*, k. 12, pp. 330–33. See also Shiratori Kiyoshi, "Rei to tatsu tonō kankei o ronjite 'Lingism' no setsu on teishōsu," pp. 363–97, who treats the numinous qualities of dragons and their role as rain gods (pp. 373–74, 380).

³³ For Silla snake deities and their associations with north Asian dragon cults see Inoue, "Chōsen bukkyō juyō," pp. 53–54.

³⁴ A similar process is seen in China, where indigenous snake and python cults are appropriated by Buddhism. See Miyakawa Hisayuki, "Local Cults around Mount Lu at the Time of Sun En's Rebellion," pp. 85, 96–99.

³⁵ For treatments of yellow dragons, see de Visser, *Dragon*, pp. 64, 74, and Taira, "Sōsho,"

first lectured on the *Vajrasamādhi*. To complete the process of assimilation, the ophidian cults of Silla eventually merged with transplanted Mahāyāna beliefs in dragons as dharma-protectors to form the variety of state-protection Buddhism (*hoguk pulgyo*) peculiar to Silla. These events were occurring during the last years of Wŏnhyo's own life.

Such a synthesis between Buddhism and native cults was undoubtedly to the advantage of the new religion and helped to placate the opposition of the Silla nobility toward Buddhism. The Silla aristocracy seem to have accepted Buddhism initially more because of political exigencies than religious faith: Silla's annexation of the neighboring territories of Samhan and Kaya, and its absorption of peoples of different cultural backgrounds and tribal allegiances, were aided by the common ideology that Buddhism provided. As the drive toward peninsular unification intensified, the Silla aristocracy had still stronger incentives to embrace Buddhism. This acceptance was necessary both to create a national consensus among the new citizens of Silla and to mollify and eventually assimilate the leaders of the Koguryŏ and Paekche regions, who had accepted Buddhism long before. Since Buddhism also served as a vital conduit through which Chinese Confucian culture was introduced into the peninsula, the Silla acceptance of Buddhism closely paralleled the process whereby foreign tribes in China became sinicized. The importance of this mature form of dragon worship in Silla is attested by the number of legends concerning dragons and dragon palaces that appear in both Buddhist and secular literature from the Silla period, and even into the founding legend of the Koryŏ dynasty, while virtually nothing is recorded for Japan of the same era.³⁶

This surge of interest in Mahāyāna Buddhism among the Silla aristocracy is reflected in the story concerning King Munmu, who died during the pe-

p. 73; for their importance in Silla Buddhism, and their relationship with Hwangnyong-sa, see Kim Yŏngt'ae, "Silla Pulgyo e issŏsŏ ūi yongsin sasang," p. 130; Inoue, "Chōsen bukkyō juyō," p. 52; McClung, "The Founding of the Royal Dragon Monastery," pp. 69–80.

³⁶ Perhaps the most lucid discussion on indigenous snake and dragon cults in Korea and their assimilation with Buddhism appears in Inoue, "Chōsen bukkyō juyō," pp. 53–57, 85. The pioneering study on dragon worship in Korea was made by Mishina Akihide in 1931 and reprinted in Mishina, *Nissen shinwa densetsu no kenkyū*, pp. 263–303. The many and varied references to Silla dragon belief appearing in *SGYS* have been culled and discussed by Kim Yŏngt'ae, "Silla pulgyo ūi yongsin sasang." The cult of the dragon (*miri*) in ancient Korea and its relation to early Maitreya (Mirŭk) worship is also discussed in Kwŏn Sangno, "Han'guk kodae sinang ūi illan," pp. 81–108; Kwŏn surveys Chinese secular materials on dragons on pp. 85–86. Matsumae Takeshi ("Kodai Kanzoku no ryūda sūhai to ōken," pp. 53–68) treats the relationship between dragon belief and royal authority. For general discussions of Korean ophidian beliefs, see also Roger Leverrier, "Buddhism and Ancestral Religious Beliefs in Korea," pp. 38–39; and Peter Lee, trans., *Songs of Flying Dragons*, 109–13.

riod in which Wŏnhyo made many of his important contributions to Buddhist scholarship. In this well-known tale, Munmu swears that, after his death, he will become a sea dragon in order to protect both Silla and its state religion from foreign invaders.³⁷ In this vow was an early attempt to combine the protective power of Mahāyāna and the pacifying power of the dragon spirits of Silla. Through Munmu's oath, dragons came to be recognized as much more than regional protective deities and rapidly evolved into a national cult, guarding both the religion and the ruling house. Hence, the notion of state protection in Silla, which developed during Wŏnhyo's lifetime, was oriented around the two foci of indigenous snake cum dragon cults and Buddhism.

While there was some assimilation of indigenous cults into this alien religion, the Buddhist elements ultimately predominated. This is illustrated in the tale about the ca. 646 foundation of T'ongdo-sa by the Vinaya Master Chajang (608–686). To gain access to the location he had selected for building a monastery, Chajang had first to pacify through the power of the dharma nine dragons guarding the site. In this pacification, the relics (*śarīra*) of Śākyamuni Buddha, which Chajang had brought back from China, played a primary role. His success through using Buddhist paraphernalia indicates that, while Buddhism may have sought to merge with local cults, the foreign religion was assumed to provide protective power superior to that of the indigenous faiths. Buddhism thus came to play the principal role in guarding the fortunes of the kingdom.³⁸

It is in this synthesis between Buddhism and native cults that one finds indications as to why the dragon story was used in relation to the *Vajrasamādhi* as well. For Silla Koreans of the last half of the seventh century, a sūtra would have been assured sympathetic attention if its appearance were associated with the guardian dragon of the sea. Hence, this legend was intended to validate to Silla Buddhists the authenticity of the scripture by associating it with a deity crucial to their own national fortunes.

The political symbolism of dragons in Silla society also provides further clarification as to why the Dragon King would have been introduced into

³⁷ SGYS 2, T 2039.49.972c3–4; *Samguk sagi* 7, p. 144. King Munmu's vow to be reborn as a state-protecting dragon after his death (681) would provide an interesting connection with the tale of the envoy's trip to the dragon palace; for this vow, see SGYS 2, p. 972c2–4; Yi Pyŏngdo and Kim Chaewŏn, *Han'guksa: kodae p'yŏn*, p. 690; Inoue, "Chōsen bukk'yō juyō," pp. 52ff.; Rogers, "P'yŏnnyŏn T'ongnok: The Foundation Legend of the Koryŏ State," pp. 25–26 n. 34. The scriptural antecedents for the role of dragon-spirits in the protection of the dharma are given in Kim Yŏngt'ae, "Silla pulgyo ūi yongsin sasang," pp. 136–44.

³⁸ The story appears in SGYS 3, p. 998b–c.

the story. Korean sources distinguish two distinct types of dragons: state-protection dragons, as exemplified in the story of King Munmu; and a latent frontier type, representing provincial magnates along the eastern seacoast who were frequently at odds with the monarchy in Kyŏngju.³⁹ A similar theme of political defiance is found for dragons from the Western Sea,⁴⁰ from where of course the *Vajrasamādhi* was recovered. Given that Silla political control had already been established throughout the peninsula by the time the sūtra was “rediscovered,” the Dragon King of the West’s role in revealing the text could thus symbolize the *Vajrasamādhi*’s challenge to the authority of the entrenched doctrinal schools of the Silla capital of Kyŏngju. The role of the mysterious siddha Tæan in editing the *Vajrasamādhi* is particularly telling in this regard. Tæan’s contempt for the court—and, by extension, for the court-supported Buddhism of the capital—is implicit in his refusal to enter the palace to receive the sūtra. This antagonism between the redactor of the *Vajrasamādhi* and the orthodox scholastic schools of the capital adumbrates the milieu in which the sūtra first appeared. It also suggests the “frontier” quality of the *Vajrasamādhi*, especially considering that its putative author will be claimed to have had difficulties in presenting his message in Silla and ultimately went into retirement, as will be seen in chapter 4. Indeed, early Korean Sŏn, the Buddhist faction from which our author hailed, initially established itself in locales far from the capital of Kyŏngju. Hence, two different but complementary symbols unique to Silla culture are brought out in this Chinese tale about the Dragon King.

The challenge to the doctrinal schools of the Silla capital intimated in this story also suggests a further reason why the legend about the discovery of the *Vajrasamādhi* is an attempt to confront Silla realities. This reason is raised in a different context—but with remarkably parallel significance—by Michael Rogers in his provocative study of the legend of Chakchegŏn, the ancestor of the Koryŏ founding family.⁴¹ Chakchegŏn, reputedly fathered by then crown prince Su-tsung of T’ang China (r. 756–762) during a trip to Korea around 753, had decided to visit his father but gave up his quest while en route over the Yellow Sea. After being thrown overboard and visiting the

³⁹ Yi Usŏng, “*Samguk yusa* sojae Ch’ŏyong sŏrhwa ūi ilbunsŏk,” pp. 89–127; discussed in Rogers, “*P’yŏnnyŏn T’ongnok*,” pp. 25–26 n. 34. Based on all the SGYS stories in which dragons appear, Kim Yŏngt’ae (“Silla pulgyo ūi yongsin sasang,” p. 145) has distinguished three main types of dragon-spirits in Silla: sea dragons; pool, spring, and well dragons; and autochthonous dragons. He does not attempt to draw out the implications of these differences, however.

⁴⁰ Rogers, “*P’yŏnnyŏn T’ongnok*,” pp. 25–26.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 8–10, translating *Koryŏ-sa*, k. 1, pp. 7b16ff.

Dragon King of the Western Sea, Chakchegön finally returned home ca. 769. As Rogers notes, his return to Korea without continuing on to see the T'ang emperor signified the compelling need of Koreans to repudiate T'ang suzerainty over their native land: "Chakchegön's conduct unequivocally affirms Koryö's cultural self-sufficiency."⁴² A similar theme occurs in this story of the *Vajrasamādhi*. The author of the legend demonstrates Korea's "cultural self-sufficiency" in the Buddhist arena as well by isolating the discovery (or authorship) of the *Vajrasamādhi* from the doctrinal schools of Kyōngju, with their close Chinese connections. Thus, the envoy from the Silla court abandons his quest to confer with T'ang medical experts and returns straight home with a text—the *Vajrasamādhi*—conferred directly from the guardian spirit of Silla.

Walter Liebenthal has suggested that the Koreans who must first have told this legend were trying to protect Wōnhyo from disrepute for having commented upon a spurious sūtra.⁴³ There are some indications in the hagiography that Wōnhyo's associations with the *Vajrasamādhi* were controversial from the moment of the text's appearance. This disputation was carried even to the point that Wōnhyo's opponents—blatantly jealous of the attention he was receiving from the royal family on account of the text—would stoop to petty theft in order to remove its commentary (if not the sūtra itself) from circulation. But I am not convinced that such indications suggest the decision to comment on the sūtra was an embarrassment to either Wōnhyo or his fellow Koreans. That the *Vajrasamādhi* was to be expounded upon had not raised the ire of Wōnhyo's antagonists; it was rather that their despised adversary had received such a prestigious commission. Since Wōnhyo knew of, and explicated, the sūtra several years before it was available in China, it seems more likely that the legend was instead created to counter possible Chinese charges that Wōnhyo himself had forged the text.

Despite the fact that this legend drew upon common Silla literary themes, there is no explicit evidence that it was created out of a distinct need to counter possible rumors circulating in Korea surrounding the authenticity of the *Vajrasamādhi*. The mention of Wōnhyo's role in popularizing the newly discovered sūtra is overwhelmingly positive. The Dragon King decrees that Wōnhyo should write a commentary to the sūtra and certifies that the text (and presumably, the lectures Wōnhyo would deliver) will be able to cure an otherwise incurable royal illness. Here are indications both of the importance of the text in Korea and of the significance of Wōnhyo's com-

⁴² Ibid., p. 44.

⁴³ Liebenthal, p. 359.

mentary to the Korean tradition; neither implies that there was any indigenous controversy over the scripture.

The *Kosŏn-sa Sōdang hwasang t'appi*, the earliest extant account of Wŏnhyo's life, composed approximately one hundred years after his death, also makes no mention of the *Vajrasamādhi* itself or of any part of this legend surrounding Wŏnhyo's associations with the text. In this inscription, only two works are mentioned: *Simmun hwajaeng-ron* (Ten approaches to the reconciliation of doctrinal controversy) and (if my reading is correct) *Hwaŏm chongyo* (Thematic essentials of the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra*).⁴⁴ To Wŏnhyo's Silla contemporaries, these two works must have represented the quintessence of his thought: *Hwaŏm chongyo*, because the thought of that sūtra dominated philosophical speculation during the period; *Simmun hwajaeng-ron*, for its outline of the syncretic philosophy that was Wŏnhyo's major contribution to Korean Buddhist thought. Whatever controversy there might have been in Korea at that time surrounding the authenticity of the *Vajrasamādhi* was apparently not enough to warrant any reference to this legend in the inscription—presuming, that is, that the legend was already evolving. Although there are several differences in detail between the Chinese and Korean accounts of this event, Iryŏn's brief mention of the story comes straight from Tsan-ning. Hence, the legend seems to have gone full circle: transmitted from Korea to China, it was finally reintroduced into Korea through the *Sung Kao-seng chuan*.

A final factor that might have prompted these legends is the attempt to legitimize the *Vajrasamādhi*'s authenticity as a valid canonical description of the teachings of original and actualized enlightenments, as found in the *Awakening of Faith*. As I shall discuss in detail in the next chapter, Wŏnhyo sees in the sūtra the scriptural validation for this gnoseological theory, which was the foundation of some of the more innovative developments in Sinitic Buddhist doctrine as well as his own soteriology. By retrieving the *Vajrasamādhi* from the same scriptural repository as the *Prajñāpāramitā-sūtras* and so many other important Mahāyāna texts, the author of this legend is giving

⁴⁴ *Kosŏn-sa Sōdang hwasang t'appi*, p. 661.10, 13. The *Simmun hwajaeng-ron* was originally in two *kwŏn* (*Sinp'yŏn chejong kyojang ch'ongnok* 3, T 2184.55.1177c19); only fragments are extant, for which see Cho Myŏnggi, ed., *Wŏnhyo taesa chŏnjip*, pp. 640–46. An attempt has been made to reconstruct the arguments that might have characterized each of the ten approaches in Yi Chongik, *Wŏnhyo ūi kūnbon sasang: Simmun hwajaeng-ron yŏn'gu*. Motoi (“Gangyō no denki,” p. 36) notes only that the *Simmun hwajaeng-ron* is mentioned in this passage from the inscription; if my reading here is correct, however, there seems to be a reference to Wŏnhyo's *Hwaŏmgyŏng chongyo*, a nonextant work of unknown length that was later subsumed in Wŏnhyo's *Chinyŏk Hwaŏmgyŏng-so*; see the notice in Ūich'ŏn's *Sinp'yŏn chejong kyojang ch'ongnok* 1, T 2184.55.1166b4, and *infra*, n. 65.

the *Vajrasamādhi*—and, by extension, the *Awakening of Faith*—the same pedigree and respectability as the canonical scriptures of the Sino-Indian tradition.

The *Samguk Yusa* Hagiography and the Dating of the *Vajrasamādhi*

Wŏnhyo is mentioned prominently in several sections of *Samguk yusa*, a Korean miscellany compiled sometime during the thirteenth century by the Buddhist monk Iryŏn (1206–1289).⁴⁵ One of the major purposes of SGYS was to collect Korean Buddhist lore that had not been recorded in other historiographical collections. The only other systematic account of the Three Kingdoms period, *Samguk sagi* (Historical record of the three kingdoms), a Korean secular history written in 1145 by Kim Pusik (1075–1151), included only passing references to Buddhist personages or ceremonies. Wŏnhyo, for example, is given but a single line in the biography of his literatus son, Sŏl Ch’ong (d.u.). Hence, SGYS comes to be of perhaps inordinate importance in understanding the early evolution of Korean Buddhism.

Like Tsan-ning, Iryŏn has included Wŏnhyo’s hagiography in his section on “Doctrinal Exegetes” (*ŭihae*). Unlike the various Chinese *Kao-seng chuans*, however, the “Doctrinal Exegetes” section in SGYS was not explicitly concerned with praising the scholastic accomplishments of eminent monks, but instead with treating those monks as objects of popular faith. While the scholarly achievements of the monks treated in this section are mentioned first in their biographies, the accounts typically soon turn to descriptions of their thaumaturgic powers. The eccentricities of the “doctrinal exegetes” in SGYS are distinguished from those of the pure “theurgists” (*sini*) only because of this initial mention of their academic prowess.⁴⁶ SGYS presents just a modicum of the incumbent detail as to Wŏnhyo’s ancestry, training, and honors, preferring instead to devote its account to exuberantly told tales of Wŏnhyo’s debauchery and his exploits among the common people. By adopting such an approach, Iryŏn’s compilation is lively, robust, even ribald on occasion.

⁴⁵ Wŏnhyo’s main biography in SGYS appears in *Wŏnhyo pulgi* (Wŏnhyo, the unbridled), SGYS 5, p. 1006a7–b29. I have translated this biography in full in my article “The Biographies of Wŏnhyo.”

⁴⁶ See Hong Yunsik, “*Samguk yusa wa Pulgyo ŭirye*,” pp. 237–39.

While SGYS is broadly based upon such Chinese models as the *Kao-seng chuans* or *Li-tai san-pao chi* (Record of the three treasures throughout successive dynasties),⁴⁷ Iryŏn shows somewhat more concern than his Chinese predecessors with drawing from a variety of materials, including local legend and lesser-known stories in *hyangjŏns* (local biographies), to supplement his account. In Wŏnhyo's case, this penchant is especially apparent, perhaps due to the fact that Iryŏn hailed from Wŏnhyo's own native area and would have been familiar with regional tales concerning the eminent Silla sage.⁴⁸ Because of his interest in events presumed to have taken place during a person's life, Iryŏn is less apt than was Tsan-ning to turn flesh-and-blood individuals into simulacra of sacred power. Hence, this hagiography does seem more amenable than most to the reconstruction of biographical fact—provided of course that its account is carefully weighed against other extrinsic evidence, such as epigraphical materials, biographies of his contemporaries, secular histories, or text-critical evidence. A careful reading of the SGYS hagiography, as supplemented by the SKSC description of Wŏnhyo, the Kosŏn-sa inscription, and other relevant material, will provide some of the few clues about specific phases in Wŏnhyo's vocation, which will be crucial in dating the *Vajrasamādhī*.

Despite the apparently jumbled structure of Iryŏn's hagiography of Wŏnhyo, it is not refractory to analysis when examined carefully. After opening his biography with remarks about Wŏnhyo's ancestry and ancillary stories about Wŏnhyo's native region, Iryŏn excerpts selections from Wŏnhyo's *Hyangjŏn* (Local biography), which is otherwise nonextant. These begin with his liaison with the widowed princess of Prasine Palace and follow a rough chronological order: his affair, the conception and birth of his son, Sŏl Ch'ong, Wŏnhyo's return to lay status, and finally his religious mission among the people. After completing his recital of the *Hyangjŏn* legends, Iryŏn then seems to backtrack and, in the last major section of his hagiography, starts over with what looks to be an explicit attempt to outline the major periods in Wŏnhyo's life. This section opens with Wŏnhyo's birth and early years, followed by an exegetical period, which culminates in the composition of his *Hwaŏmgŷŏng-so* (Commentary to the *Avatamsaka-sūtra*; discussed *infra*). His proselytizing and eccentric stage follows, which he

⁴⁷ Gari Ledyard suggested to me the parallels between *Li-tai san-pao chi* and SGYS.

⁴⁸ Iryŏn came from Changsan (the old Amnyang-kun that is mentioned in Wŏnhyo's biography), which would help to account for his familiarity with the *Hyangjŏn* materials on Wŏnhyo. See Kim Pusik, *Samguk sagi*, k. 34, p. 539a; *Sinjung Tongguk yŏji sŏngnam*, k. 27, fol. 1a-b.

abandons to return to scholarship in order to write his commentary to the *Vajrasamādhi*. This section concludes with an account of Wŏnhyo's death and funeral.

Let me cite the passage in question from the *Samguk yusa* so that the periods Iryŏn is describing are clear.

[1] The village of his birth was named Pulchi (Stage of Buddhahood); his monastery was called Ch'ogae (Initial Opening); he called himself Wŏnhyo (Break of Dawn), which refers to the first shining of the sun of buddhahood. [The name] "Wŏnhyo" is also the Silla pronunciation. People of his time all referred to him in the vernacular as Sidan (First Dawning).

[2] When he resided at Punhwang Monastery preparing his *Hwaŏm-so*, he reached the fourth [fascicle of the commentary] on the *Shih hui-hsiang p'in* (Ten transferences chapter) and, having completed it, laid down his brush.

[3] Furthermore, because of the reproach he had suffered,⁴⁹ he divided his body among the hundred pines.⁵⁰ Everyone considered his status and position to be that of the first stage (*chi*; Skt. *bhūmi*).⁵¹

⁴⁹ As related in the SKSC biography, T 2061.50.730a17.

⁵⁰ "Divided his body among the hundred pines" (*pun'gu ŏ paeksong*): The imagery here can be interpreted in two ways. First, Wŏnhyo's body was scattered about like the infinite number of needles of hundreds of pine trees; hence, he was very busy, by implication, with odious official duties (specifically a possible military appointment) that were antithetical to the transcendent lifestyle of a monk; see the interpretation in Yi Pyŏngdo, trans., *Samguk yusa*, p. 403 n. 6, and cf. Peter Lee, *Anthology of Korean Literature*, p. 33. This interpretation casts obvious aspersions on Wŏnhyo's activities. A more salutary interpretation, which I consider to be more plausible in the present context, is to construe this passage as an allusion to a bodhisattva's supernatural power (*abhijñā*) of displaying myriads of transformation bodies (*nirmāṇakāya*). As Iryŏn mentions elsewhere, just as Wŏnhyo's friend Nangji (d.u.) was able to ride the clouds to China, in the same way, "Wŏnhyo divided himself into a hundred bodies" (SGYS 5, p. 1015c15). Support for this interpretation appears in a passage in the *Daśabhūmika-sūtra* (*Shih-ti ching* 2, T 287.10.542b5) which refers to the ability of bodhisattvas on the first stage of the bodhisattva path, the *Pramuditābhūmi*, "to manifest a hundred transformation bodies," language that parallels the account here and that would seem to support a positive reading of the following assertion that Wŏnhyo was considered to be a person "of the first stage." This reading is corroborated in *Avatamsaka-sūtra* (*Ta-fang-kuang fo hua-yen ching* 9, T 278.9.548b22); and see discussion in Yi Chongik, "Wŏnhyo ũi saengae wa sasang," p. 218. Kim Yŏngt'ae ("Wŏnhyo yŏn'gu," pp. 71–72) also notes other mentions of Wŏnhyo as a bodhisattva, including an interlinear note in SGYS 3 (p. 987c27) in which Wŏnhyo (there, called by his monastery's name, Punhwang) is said to have been the transformation of the renowned Indian logician, Diinnāga (ca. A.D. fifth century). The ultimate sense here seems to be that Wŏnhyo's unhindered practice allowed him to go anywhere without discrimination—even to the bars and brothels normally forbidden to virtuous people—so that he seemingly appeared everywhere, as if via transformation bodies.

⁵¹ Construing the precise referent of "first stage" is also somewhat problematic. The term can refer to the Dry-Wisdom stage (Kanhye-chi) of the bodhisattva path, a pejorative term

[4] Also, due to the inducement of the Dragon of the Sea, he received a royal command while on the road and wrote [*Kūmgang*] *sammaegyōng-so*. He placed his brushes and inkstone between the two horns of an ox; because of this, he was known as Kaksūng (Horn Rider),⁵² which also expressed the recondite purport of the two enlightenments—original (*pon'gak/pen-chüeh*) and actualized (*sigak/shih-chüeh*). Dharma Master Tæan collated the folios and then pasted them together. This [arrangement] also was “knowing the sound and singing in harmony.”

[5] After [Wŏnhyo] had entered quiescence, [Söl] Ch'ong crushed his remaining bones and cast them into a life-like image, which he enshrined at Punhwang Monastery—this in order to show reverence and affection and his intent [to mourn his father until] the ends of heaven. When Ch'ong prostrated beside it, the image suddenly turned its head [to look at him]; still today, it remains turned to the side.

A major difference between the *SKSC* and *SGYS* hagiographies, and the feature that most distinguishes Iryŏn's account from that of Tsan-ning, is the stress on Wŏnhyo himself found in *SGYS* and the biography's concern to recount as many of the tales still known about the events of his life. As the title chosen for this miscellany would lead us to expect, Iryŏn, with the slightest of pretexts, packs his account with any and probably all extant stories, no matter how remotely relevant. Such detail serves the important purpose of supplying a context to Wŏnhyo's life and provides a much stronger sense of the man than was conveyed in the Chinese hagiography. While space will not allow a detailed treatment of each major biographical event, I will at least be able here to sketch the relative chronology of important stages in Wŏnhyo's life, especially as they relate to the *Vajrasamādhi*, and make some general comments about Wŏnhyo's mature career. This material has

indicating an inferior state of understanding, which is characterized by conceptual knowledge, not transcendental realization. It is often referred to as the first of the ten *bhūmis* of the expedient vehicle. Construed in this way, it would imply that because Wŏnhyo did not limit the places he frequented, as monks should, others considered him to be only an inferior Buddhist (“the first stage”). As I indicate in the preceding note, however, a positive reading is to be preferred.

⁵² Kaksūng (Horn Rider, or Horned Vehicle) is homophonous in Korean with Kaksūng (Enlightenment Vehicle), the pun Iryŏn obviously intended. Peter Lee (*Anthology*, p. 53) assumes that the epithet refers to Wŏnhyo himself and translates the term as Horn Rider, which seems most plausible to me also. The referent of Horn Rider in the eulogy that follows does, however, seem somewhat ambiguous, and could support a reading of Horn Rider as referring either to the ox-cart itself (“Horned Vehicle”) or to the text of the *Vajrasamādhi*. Kim Yōngt'ae (“Wŏnhyo yŏn'gu,” p. 63) suggests this reference is an allusion to the simile of the ox-cart in *Miao-fa-lien-hua ching*, T 262.9.13b.

important implications for Wŏnhyo's intellectual development and the relative dating of his works, which have heretofore gone unnoticed.

Iryŏn, as is known from other sections of his work, was quite concerned with chronological fidelity and often attempted to sort out contradicting dates.⁵³ Including the period of Wŏnhyo's early vocation and study when he made his two attempts to travel to China (which Iryŏn covers later in the biography of Wŏnhyo's colleague Ŭisang), Iryŏn divides Wŏnhyo's life into six distinct stages, which must be carefully distinguished if any chronological sense is to be made of the biography. If one were to attempt to assign dates to these periods, an admittedly imprecise enterprise, the following chronology might prove to be the most supportable:

- I. Birth and adolescence (617–631);
- II. Ordination and early vocation (ca. 632–661)
 - a. First China trip (650)
 - b. Second China trip (661)
- III. Textual exegete (ca. 662–676)
 - a. Birth of Sŏl Ch'ong (ca. 662)
 - b. *Hwaŏmgyŏng-so* as final composition before his retirement (ca. 676)
- IV. Proselytist among the people (ca. 677–684)
- V. Return to scholarship (ca. 685)
 - a. Writing of *KSGR*
- VI. Death and funeral (686)⁵⁴

There are problematic points in each of these major periods that cannot be dismissed lightly. While I cannot examine all such questions, I would like to allude briefly to a few points that have not previously received extensive treatment. To delimit the start of Wŏnhyo's exegetical career, I shall first turn to accounts of his alleged pilgrimages to the Chinese mainland.

⁵³ See, for example, *SGYS* 3, p. 997a10–11, where Iryŏn attempts to clarify the problematic chronological relationship between Wŏnhyo, Ŭisang, and Pŏmil (810–889). Iryŏn also attempts to reconcile the disparate chronologies of Mukhoja and Ado *hwasang* by postulating that Mukhoja was simply a nickname for Ado (*SGYS* 3, p. 986c.28), who probably arrived in Silla during the reign of King Nulchi (*SGYS* 3, p. 986c26–7); the four different theories on Ado's life are summarized in Lee, *Lives*, p. 6 and n. 29.

⁵⁴ Other attempts at a chronology of Wŏnhyo's career, such as those by Motoi Nobuo ("Gangyō no denki," pp. 50–51) and Sung Bae Park ("Wŏnhyo's Commentaries," p. 71), should be used cautiously. Motoi in particular has often interpolated dates for the events described in the *SKSC* and *SGYS* hagiographies without any apparent evidence.

Wŏnhyo's Attempted China Trips and His Enlightenment Experience

Of all of the events in Wŏnhyo's early religious career, perhaps none has captured the imagination of East Asian Buddhists more than the bizarre tale surrounding his attempted pilgrimages to China and his enlightenment. According to tradition, Wŏnhyo twice attempted to travel to the mainland to study with the renowned translator Hsüan-tsang (d. 664), who had returned to China in 648 after sixteen years in India. Surprisingly, however, there is little information on Wŏnhyo's attempted pilgrimages included in his own biographies, and the chronological schema given in his *SGYS* biography does not include these trips. This may be because they were covered in Wŏnhyo's *Haengjang* (Account of conduct) (though this is never explicitly stated), or because they are mentioned in the biography of his companion, Ŭisang, which immediately follows in the miscellany. This is unfortunate, for it would have helped to establish Iryŏn's view of the relative chronological relationship between these journeys and the other events in Wŏnhyo's life.

There are also many discrepancies in the extant accounts of these trips. *SKSC*, for example, makes only brief reference to the first pilgrimage and completely ignores the second. Ŭisang's biographies also give conflicting information, for his biography in *SKSC* only mentions the latter journey via sea, while the *SGYS* account includes both. Although the dating of the trips varies in the different versions, based on other supporting documentation, it is now generally accepted that the first took place in 650 and the latter in 661.⁵⁵ In addition to their important chronological considerations, these stories are also worth considering because Wŏnhyo's experience of enlightenment is said to have taken place in the course of the second of these trips, obviously an important event in reconstructing his biography.

On Wŏnhyo's first journey with Ŭisang, the two pilgrims were supposedly arrested in Liao-tung by Koguryŏ border guards for espionage and imprisoned for several "weeks" (*hsün*; Kor. *sun*) before being repatriated to Silla.⁵⁶ Wŏnhyo's biography in *SKSC* refers to these events laconically as his "discrepant karma." Little more is known about this trip.

On their second trip, Ŭisang's biography relates that he and Wŏnhyo had traveled to a port in Paekche territory, where they intended to board a ship

⁵⁵ For a survey of these materials, see Kim Yŏngt'ae, "Wŏnhyo yŏn'gu," p. 52; cf. Peter Lee, "Fa-tsang and Ŭisang," p. 56.

⁵⁶ *SKSC* 4, T 2061.50.729a7-8. A *hsün* is actually a ten-day period.

for China. Caught in a heavy downpour, they were forced to spend the night in what they thought was an earthen sanctuary but which turned out in the morning's light to be an old tomb littered with skulls. Still trapped by the incessant rain, they had to pass still another night in the tomb, and before the night was up they were harassed by evil spirits. Wŏnhyo was profoundly moved by the experience and marveled:

Dwelling overnight yesterday, I was content in what I thought was an earthen sanctuary. But staying overnight this evening, I am ghastly haunted by a host of demons. Hence, I learn that because thoughts arise, all types of dharmas arise; but once thoughts cease, a sanctuary and a tomb are not different. Furthermore, the three realms of existence are mind-alone; the myriads of dharmas are mere-representation. Apart from the mind there are no dharmas; it is futile to attempt to seek [those dharmas] elsewhere. I will not continue on to T'ang.⁵⁷

Wŏnhyo then returned home and Ŭisang traveled alone to China.

SGYS claims that this second journey took place at the beginning of the Yung-hui era (650–655), but this is probably confusing it with their earlier trip to Liao-tung. However, the SKSC biography of Ŭisang only mentions this single journey via sea, and its dating of this trip as taking place in 669 is equally implausible, given that Ŭisang's teacher in China, Chih-yen, died in 668.⁵⁸ Adding to the mystery, the SGYS biography of Ŭisang never states that Wŏnhyo accompanied Ŭisang on the second trip. While this lacuna might be taken to indicate that the story and the account of Wŏnhyo's enlightenment experience included therein are actually apocryphal, it is more probable that because the subject of the biography is Ŭisang, not Wŏnhyo, there was no compelling need to mention the latter.

It is also significant that neither of these two records makes any mention of a widely known story of Wŏnhyo's enlightenment, which is ubiquitous in popular accounts of Wŏnhyo's life. In this tale, which has been traced to the twelfth-century *Shih-men Hung Chüeh-fan lin-chien lu*, after finally reach-

⁵⁷ SKSC 4, T 2061.50.729a12–15; translated in Hubert Durt, "La Biographie du Moine Coréen Ŭi-Sang d'après le Song Kao Seng Tchouan," pp. 415–16; and partially translated with discussion in Yi Chongik, "Wŏnhyo ŭi saengae," pp. 189–90; Sung Bae Park, "Wŏnhyo's Commentaries," pp. 48–53; Kim Yŏngt'ae, "Wŏnhyo yŏn'gu," p. 50. For the implications of this enlightenment experience, see Sung Bae Park, "On Wŏnhyo's Enlightenment," pp. 470–467 [sic]; Yi Chongik, "Wŏnhyo ŭi saengae," pp. 190–91.

⁵⁸ Peter Lee, "Fa-tsang and Ŭisang," p. 56 n. 8.

ing China, Wŏnhyo first traveled among famous mountain temples before setting out alone on a backroad. Forced to call a halt to his journey because of darkness, he stayed overnight in a cave. Overcome by thirst, Wŏnhyo was able to find a small spring of water in the cave, from which he drank with his hand until he was completely satisfied. Upon waking in the morning, however, he discovered to his profound disgust that what he had thought was sweet spring water was actually rank water stagnating in a skull. Realizing that it was only his mind that created the distinction between satisfying refreshment and revolting spectacle, he was immediately enlightened to the truth that all dharmas are created by the mind alone, and he returned to Silla.⁵⁹ This story seems to be an adaptation of the SKSC legend; and, given that it is not corroborated in any other accounts, it should be disregarded in any serious evaluation of Wŏnhyo's career.

Wŏnhyo as Textual Exegete and Proselytist

I would now like to move to a discussion of the chronology of Wŏnhyo's exegetical and proselytizing periods and how these relate to his return to scholarship. Establishing the relative chronology of these three periods is of utmost relevance to SKSC's hagiography and its account of the recovery of the *Vajrasamādhi*; it also covers the mature phase of Wŏnhyo's career. In these sections as well one finds a graphic illustration of the ways in which hagiographical evidence, as supplemented by documentation from other sources, can yield implicit historical information about the wider contexts of a subject's life.

The continuity in both style and content apparent in most of Wŏnhyo's exegetical works suggests that they were written in succession, with little break between compositions. While this is not to say that all of the hundred or so works in some two hundred fascicles attributed to Wŏnhyo are authentic,⁶⁰ Wŏnhyo's authorship of the majority of these twenty-some extant

⁵⁹ *Shih-men Hung Chüeh-fan lin-chien lu*, ZZ 2b, 21, 4, 295a, from whence it entered into secondary accounts; see Kim Yŏngt'ae, "Wŏnhyo yŏn'gu," p. 53.

⁶⁰ Etani Ryūkai ("Shiragi Gangyō no *Yūshin anrakudō* wa gisaku ka," pp. 16–23), for example, has raised doubts concerning Wŏnhyo's authorship of *Yusim allak-to*. Among the five principal reasons for his suspicions are the dearth of catalogue entries for the text until the Kamakura period, its quotation of passages from two works not translated until after 713, and the similarities between its first half and another of Wŏnhyo's works, the *Muryangsu chongyo* (Thematic essentials of the *Amitābha-sūtra*), leading Etani to suspect that *Yusim* is simply reedited

compositions is unquestioned. Since Wŏnhyo was so determined to travel to China to enhance his knowledge of Indian Buddhist scholarship under the tutelage of the Hsüan-tsang, it seems reasonable to presume that he would not have felt himself competent to write most of these commentaries before his attempted pilgrimages.⁶¹ Hence, most of his scholarship probably post-dates his return in 661 from his second attempt to travel to the mainland.

Political events on the peninsula at the time provide some information that may help us to sort out the dates of his exegetical period, as well as to clarify when Wŏnhyo might have left on his subsequent proselytizing mission among the people. Even after the fall of Koguryŏ in 668, peace still did not reign on the peninsula. In 675–676, Silla itself was invaded by the combined armies of T'ang soldiers and Paekche mercenaries, which would have made extensive travel difficult, if not impossible. Hence, if Wŏnhyo actually did go on tour to “sing and dance his way through a thousand villages and a myriad hamlets,”⁶² as the SGYS biography states, this could probably not have occurred until after the withdrawal of the T'ang forces in 676. If so, Wŏnhyo would have had approximately fifteen years, from 661 to about 676, to complete most of his commentaries. The only date of which I am aware for any of Wŏnhyo's writings appears in the postface to his *P'an pir-yang-ron*, which states that it was written by Wŏnhyo in 671, seventh month, sixteenth day (August 25, 671), at Haengmyŏng-sa.⁶³ This date converges nicely with the chronological scheme I propose here.

Although our present state of knowledge does not allow us to ascertain much about the respective composition dates of most of Wŏnhyo's works, there are some indications that the SGYS biography is attempting to provide some chronological clarification for two of his most influential works: his *Chinyŏk Hwaŏmgyŏng-so* (Commentary to the Chin translation of the *Avatamsaka-sūtra*) and *KSGR*. Against all previous scholarly opinion, I believe Iryŏn's conclusion is that *Hwaŏmgyŏng-so* was the last work Wŏnhyo wrote before his departure to proselytize among the people; an extraordinary series of events later prompted him, however, to return one final time

excerpts from that treatise. A periphrastic translation of this treatise appears in Leo Lee, *Le maître Wŏn-hyo de Sil-la du VIII^e siècle: Sa vie, ses écrits, son apostolat*, pp. 61–88.

⁶¹ See discussion in Kim Yŏngt'ae, “Wŏnhyo yŏn'gu,” p. 56.

⁶² SGYS 2, p. 1006b14.

⁶³ Edited by Kim Chigyŏn and included in Cho Myŏnggi, ed., *Wŏnhyo chŏnjip*, pp. 674, 683; summarized in Cho Myŏnggi, *Silla Pulgyo ūi inyŏm kwa yŏksa*, p. 120. The monastery name is clearly Haengmyŏng-sa in the original manuscript, not the Chuhaeng-sa given in the edited text.

to scholarship before his death in 686 to write *KSGR*, his commentary to the newly recovered *Vajrasamādhi*. Unlike Tsan-ning, who is content with his role as a purveyor of legends, Iryŏn thus seems to be attempting in this latter portion of his hagiography to bring some chronological sense to Wŏnhyo's life. In the section from his *SGYS* biography cited above, Iryŏn takes up Wŏnhyo's life near its end, starting with period III.b, the events that took place from the time that he retired from scholarship, with the completion of his *Hwaŏmgyŏng-so*; continuing with IV, his travels among the people, proselytizing with popular songs and gnomic verses; to V.a, a brief mention of the circumstances that led to writing *KSGR*, apparently his final composition; and culminating with VI, his death and funeral. Most scholars have presumed that Wŏnhyo wrote *KSGR* ca. 665, around the time of the *In-wang-kyŏng* assembly mentioned in the *SKSC* account (which I have shown to be actually undatable); later, as the final event in his life, Wŏnhyo then started his *Hwaŏmgyŏng-so*, but dropped it unfinished and went into retirement.⁶⁴ But a close reading of the *SGYS* story suggests instead that Iryŏn was attempting to place Wŏnhyo's retirement *prior* to the writing of *KSGR*. As I noted previously, Iryŏn shows throughout his miscellany a concern with chronological fidelity. Indeed, the listing of events in Wŏnhyo's life that he gives in the last section of his biography seems explicitly chronological. Iryŏn also remarked in the biography that he did not intend to duplicate information on Wŏnhyo already given in *SKSC*; hence, he was probably not simply appending to the end of his account a synopsis of Tsan-ning's story of the discovery of the *Vajrasamādhi*.

In Iryŏn's account, Wŏnhyo seems to have gone into voluntary retirement from his scholarly activities even before completing his *Hwaŏmgyŏng-so*, perhaps intended to be his magnum opus given the importance of the *Avatamsaka-sūtra* at that time in Silla Buddhism.⁶⁵ The implication here is

⁶⁴ Mizuno, p. 40. Motoi Nobuo ("Gangyō no denki," p. 51), Rhi Ki-yong (*Kūmgang sam-maegyŏng-ron*, p. 331), Etani Ryūkai ("Shiragi Gangyō no Yūshin anrakudō," p. 19), and Kim Yŏngt'ae ("Wŏnhyo yŏn'gu," p. 59) all accept that *Hwaŏmgyŏng-so* was Wŏnhyo's last work.

⁶⁵ Only the preface and fascicle three (to the "Ju-lai kuang-mung-chüeh p'in") of Wŏnhyo's *Chinyŏk Hwaŏmgyŏng-so* are extant; the fragments are published in *T* 2757.85.234c–236a, and Cho Myŏnggi, *Wŏnhyo taesa chŏnjip*, pp. 647–53. The text is first listed, though without comment, in the Japanese Kegon catalogue, *Kegonshū shōsho byō immyōroku* (*T* 2177.55.1133a19), compiled in 914 by Enchō (d.u.). Ūich'ŏn lists it in his 1090 catalogue, *Sinp'yŏn chejong kyojang ch'ongnok* (*T* 2184.55.1166b4), as a ten-*kwŏn* work. His interlinear note adds: "Originally this [text] was in eight *kwŏn*. Now, its fifth *kwŏn* has been expanded [*kae*, lit., opened up, divided] and [Wŏnhyo's *Hwaŏmgyŏng*] *chongyo* combined with it, to make [a total of] ten *kwŏn*." For Wŏnhyo's Hwaŏm thought, see especially Kim Hyŏnghŭi, "Hyŏnjon ch'an-so-rŭl t'onghae pon Wŏnhyo ūi *Hwaŏm-kyŏng* kwan"; Chang Wŏn'gyu, "Hwaŏm kyohak wansŏnggi ūi sasang

that Wŏnhyo had judged his exegetical and scholarly career to be at a close; he had nothing more to say to the theologians and was content to go “on the road” among the people. Although no date is known for his *Hwaŏmgyŏng-so*, if Wŏnhyo had ten years as a proselytist before his death, it can be tentatively assumed that the commentary was completed sometime around 676.

One curious note about the reference to the *Hwaŏmgyŏng-so* is that Iryŏn says (sect. 2), “he reached the fourth [fascicle? (*kwŏn*) of the commentary] on the *Shih hui-hsiang p’in* (Ten transferences chapter) and, having completed it, laid down his brush.” Since neither bibliographical entries nor Wŏnhyo’s preface to *Hwaŏmgyŏng-so* give any information as to the structure of this commentary (such an outline would have appeared in the opening lines of the nonextant first fascicle of the commentary, judging from the approach Wŏnhyo adopts in other exegeses), one is left to assume that by “fourth” here is meant the fourth *kwŏn* of the commentary, and that the commentary was originally in four *kwŏn*, not the eight or ten that Üich’ŏn’s scriptural catalogue mentioned. One of the meanings of the term “laid down his brush” (*chŏlp’il*) is to stop or to interrupt one’s writing,⁶⁶ which could imply that Wŏnhyo gave up writing the treatise before it was finished. Potentially significant is the possible relationship between the *Shih hui-hsiang p’in* (Ten transferences chapter), which is concerned with the transfer of merit from the bodhisattva to unenlightened beings, and his immediately succeeding departure to proselytize among the people: Wŏnhyo’s reading of this chapter may have inspired him to leave behind his commentarial career for active missionary work.⁶⁷ While Wŏnhyo traveled, Iryŏn says that he danced with a gourd, which he named Unhindered (Muae), after a passage in the *Avatamsaka-sūtra*.⁶⁸ This name also suggests that Wŏnhyo had already worked on the *Avatamsaka-sūtra* before he entered his proselytizing period. When cou-

yŏn’gu,” pp. 11–26; Kim Ingsŏk, *Hwaŏm-hak kaeron*, pp. 19–22; Kim Chigyŏn, “Silla Hwaŏmhak ūi kyebo wa sasang,” pp. 39–41; Kim Chigyŏn, “Silla Hwaŏmhak ūi churyu ko,” pp. 263–65; Koh Ik-jin, “Wŏnhyo’s Hua-yen Thought,” pp. 30–33. For a general discussion of the importance of the *Avatamsaka-sūtra* in Korean Buddhism, see, for example, Kim Chigyŏn, “Silla Hwaŏmhak ūi churyu ko,” pp. 257–58; Kim Ingsŏk, *Hwaŏm-hak*, pp. 17–87.

⁶⁶ “Laid down his brush” (*chŏlp’il*) can refer to either a final calligraphy done before death or superior calligraphic abilities. In the present context, however, it seems most plausible to take it in the sense of “to interrupt one’s writing,” a meaning found in *Ch’un-ch’iu* (*Shih san-ching chu-shu* ed., vol. 6), ch. 59, fol. 11a3.

⁶⁷ Cf. Yi Chongik, “Wŏnhyo ūi saengae,” p. 194.

⁶⁸ The passage from the *Hua-yen ching*, “all unhindered men leave birth and death along a single path,” appears at *Ta-fang-kuang fo hua-yen ching* 5, T 278.9.429a19; and *Ta-fang-kuang fo hua-yen ching* 13, T 279.10.68c13.

pled with the following statement that Wŏnhyo received a royal command to compose a commentary to the *Vajrasamādhi* “while on the road,” the implication is that Wŏnhyo went into itinerant retirement after either completing or interrupting his writing of *Hwaŏmgyŏng-so*, only to return to scholarship to compose his *KSGR*. However, since there is no implication in any source that Wŏnhyo’s *Hwaŏmgyŏng-so* ever circulated in an unfinished state, it seems safer to assume that the commentary was probably complete in four *kwŏn*, and subsequently redivided into double that number sometime before Ŭich’ŏn’s time, a common occurrence with East Asian books.

Regardless of whether Wŏnhyo gave up writing the *Hwaŏmgyŏng-so* before its completion, however, it seems virtually certain that he retired to a life of disseminating the dharma among the people some years before his death. Although this period would have been primarily devoted to popular sermons and didactic teaching, it is probable that he composed some of his songs and short tracts dealing with faith and moral discipline at this time, as Sung Bae Park has suggested.⁶⁹ All the evidence, then, indicates that Wŏnhyo’s main exegetical efforts preceded his proselytizing stage.

After perhaps a decade spent traveling among the peasantry, another event intervened that took Wŏnhyo away from his missionary vocation and compelled him to return to the mainstream of Silla scholastic life: the “appearance” of the *Vajrasamādhi*. Wŏnhyo was obviously fascinated by the text, enough to convince him to suspend his travels and return to writing, apparently for this one last time—and, again, not once, but twice, if one follows Tsan-ning’s version of the legend. Because of certain teachings in the *Vajrasamādhi* that demand knowledge of nascent movements in Chinese Ch’an Buddhism, Wŏnhyo could not have been the writer of the *Vajrasamādhi*. I will propose an authorship candidate later who would have had the requisite knowledge of Chinese developments. But recognizing the problems of passage between the mainland and Silla during the period preceding the fall of Koguryŏ in 668—as Wŏnhyo’s own experiences with Koguryŏ border guards illustrate—it is doubtful that this man could have returned to Silla before that date. Hence, the *Vajrasamādhi* was apparently composed in Korea sometime between 668 and 685, and more plausibly toward the latter of the two dates. This dating is supported by the fact that the *Vajrasamādhi* is neither quoted nor cited in any of Wŏnhyo’s other compositions, even though his commentary to the sūtra quotes extensively from the full range

⁶⁹ Sung Bae Park, “Wŏnhyo’s Commentaries,” p. 71.

of texts he had consulted in earlier writings.⁷⁰ For a scripture as obviously important to Wŏnhyo as was the *Vajrasamādhi*, it is difficult, if not impossible, to imagine that he would not at least have referred to it in one of his earlier works if the text had been available to him. It is therefore safe to date the composition of the *Vajrasamādhi* to a time after the completion of all Wŏnhyo's other works and, from the hagiographical accounts, to sometime between the composition of *Hwaŏmgyŏng-so* and his death. Hence, although Iryŏn's account of these three final periods in Wŏnhyo's life is quite terse, its information is corroborated by other biographical, textual, and historical evidence.

The parallels between the SKSC's redaction of the discovery of the *Vajrasamādhi* and the earlier-mentioned legend of Chakchegŏn provide a prudent reason for Iryŏn to truncate the story so radically. The *Vajrasamādhi* legend was strikingly similar to the account concerning the ancestry of the Koryŏ ruling family, mentioned above, and there must have been implicit political liabilities in casting aspersions on the authenticity of the royal genealogy. To avoid any such conflict (his excuse being that he did not need to repeat stories already covered in SKSC), Iryŏn passed quickly over the event, apparently assuming that it was easily available to whomever might wish to read it in the politically uncompromising Chinese record.

By the same token too, the involvement of Wŏnhyo, retrospectively viewed during the Koryŏ as the most renowned figure of Unified Silla Buddhism, might have compelled Iryŏn to relate the story in less controversial fashion; for even in Tsan-ning's account the role given to Taean in the reconstruction of the scripture is carefully differentiated from Wŏnhyo's responsibility for popularizing it. Iryŏn has gone one step further, by telling the legend so that any and all suspicions about the provenance of the *Vajrasamādhi* are carefully expunged. Iryŏn limits his remarks to the statement that the Dragon King ordered Wŏnhyo to write a commentary to the scripture—suggesting divine intervention in the ideas expressed in the commentary, not necessarily in the sūtra itself. The obviously apocryphal origins of the *Vajrasamādhi* in Tsan-ning's version of the legend may have been a sensitive issue to Koryŏ Koreans. By separating Wŏnhyo from any question about the composition of the text, Iryŏn has kept Wŏnhyo's reputation unblemished; the person closest to the questionable manuscript folios is the otherwise unknown Taean.

⁷⁰ See the convenient chart of Wŏnhyo's extant works and the texts they cite in Rhi Kiyong, "Kyŏngjŏn ūi nat'an an Wŏnhyo ūi tokch'angsŏng," pp. 220–23.

But what did Wŏnhyo see in the *Vajrasamādhi* that was so enticing to him intellectually? Its teachings apparently offered a message certain to appeal to Silla Buddhists, enough so that Wŏnhyo would be lured out of retirement to write what would be his last major commentary, *KSGR*. The next chapter considers the doctrinal teachings of the *Vajrasamādhi* and examine the contributions the sūtra made to East Asian Buddhist philosophy.

CHAPTER THREE

THE DOCTRINAL TEACHINGS OF THE *VAJRASĀMADHI*

The Acculturation of Buddhism to East Asia

The Buddhist tradition that evolved in East Asia was a synthesis of ideas drawn from imported Indian and Central Asian Buddhism, combined with indigenous religious, philosophical, and cultural traits. India and East Asia are separated by immense geographical, cultural, and linguistic gulfs, which were not easily bridged. A creative process spanning several centuries was required to narrow the gap separating the two cultures and to bring the alien religion of Buddhism within the purview of indigenous intellectual discourse. This assimilation was made all the more difficult by the sheer size of the Buddhist scriptural corpus, and the different languages from which those texts had to be translated: Sanskrit, Middle Indic, and the several Indo-European dialects of Central Asia and the Takla Makhan basin, Sogdian and Khotanese among them. As an open canon with relatively liberal standards for the inclusion of new material, the Buddhist tripitaka had grown to include hundreds of texts, in thousands of volumes, by the time it began to be transmitted to East Asia. In the last quarter of the fourth century, when the first Buddhist scriptural catalogue was made by Tao-an, the Chinese had already to come to grips with some 561 texts in 786 volumes.¹ By the early part of the eighth century, just a few decades after the composition of the *Vajrasamādhi*, the canon had grown many times larger, to some 2,278 texts in 7,056 volumes.²

¹ To this number can be added twenty-six apocryphal scriptures and twenty-four treatises by Tao-an himself, giving a total of 611 texts. See Hayashiya, *Kyōroku kenkyū*, p. 47.

² *K'ai-yüan shih-chiao lu* 1, T 2154.55.477a; this includes all texts cited in the catalogue, including biographies, indigenous commentaries, and apocryphal scriptures. Of this total, only 1,076 texts in 5,048 volumes appear in listings of texts actually entered into the canon (*Ju-tsang lu*); see the notice at *ch.* 19, T 2154.55.680a–b.

But compounding these linguistic and translation problems were the disparate messages of its texts. In addition to discovering early on the split in Buddhism between the Mahāyāna (the “Great Vehicle”) and the Śrāvakayāna (which the Mahāyāna pejoratively termed the “Lesser Vehicle,” or Hīnayāna), East Asians also learned that Mahāyāna itself included a number of learned “schools” and practice traditions, the approaches and premises of which seemed at times to be all but antithetical to one another. Resolving these eristic conflicts occupied much of the attention of Buddhist exegetes during the Sui and T’ang periods.

By the sixth and seventh centuries, Chinese Buddhists were well on their way toward developing hermeneutical taxonomies—what the Chinese termed *p’an-chiao* (Kor. *pan’gyo*), or “analyzing the teachings”—that would bring order to these variant materials and show how they all could collaborate in the common goal of liberation. What is striking in these maturing Sinitic interpretations of Buddhism is the emphasis they place on what they considered the kataphasis of the Yogācāra and Tathāgatagarbha systems, rather than the apophasis of the Madhyamaka school. Whereas early Chinese Buddhists had been attracted by the sheer novelty of the Madhyamaka ideology of emptiness (*sūnyavāda*), by the sixth century the cynosure of Buddhist scholarship had shifted from emptiness to immanence.³ To show how pervasive this tendency was in China, even Chi-tsang (549–623), the principal exponent of the Chinese Madhyamaka school (the “Three Treatises” or San-lun school), incorporated the Buddha-nature doctrine into his doctrinal system.⁴ This new focus is reflected in the subordination of Prajñāpāramitā and Madhyamaka literature to more explicitly Tathāgatagarbha teachings in these indigenous doctrinal taxonomies. T’ien-t’ai classifications, for example, typically place the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*, a scripture renowned in East Asia for proclaiming the inherence of the buddha-nature in all beings, above the Prajñāpāramitā.⁵ In the Hua-yen taxonomy, the Prajñāpāramitā was considered to be merely the incipient (*shih*) stage of Mahāyāna, just a step above the maligned Hīnayāna, and was succeeded by the final (*chung*) Mahāyāna teachings of Tathāgatagarbha. But the teachings of

³ For a compelling exposition of the Chinese critique of Madhyamaka, see Robert M. Gimello, “Apophatic and Kataphatic Discourse in Mahāyāna: A Chinese View,” pp. 117–36.

⁴ See Kamata Shigeo, *Chūgoku bukkyō shisōshi kenkyū*, pp. 31–46; Aaron Koseki, “Prajñāpāramitā and the Buddhahood of the Non-Sentient World: The San-lun Assimilation of Buddha-Nature and Middle Path Doctrine,” pp. 16–33.

⁵ See discussion in David W. Chappell, ed., Masao Ichishima, comp., *T’ien-t’ai Buddhism: An Outline of the Fourfold Teachings*, pp. 30–40, and diagram p. 35.

the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra*, Hua-yen claimed, represented the full perfection of Buddhism by being beyond all distinctions and thus epitomized the consummate unity (*yüan*) of the religion.⁶ Besides their polemical purpose, such classifications also sought to bring harmony to the teachings and helped to instill in Chinese adherents a syncretic perspective on Buddhism.

This taxonomical concern was no less ardent in Korea. Wŏnhyo also developed his own scriptural hermeneutic, which classified Buddhist texts in terms adapted from the *Awakening of Faith*. Wŏnhyo's taxonomy of the teachings will be covered in more detail later, but for now let it suffice to say that it subordinates Prajñāpāramitā literature to the *Nirvāṇa* and *Avataṃsaka* sūtras and finally places the more syncretic teachings of the *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra* and *Awakening of Faith* at its apex. This ordering illustrates Wŏnhyo's penchant for approaches to doctrinal study that were synchronic rather than diachronic and that would serve to synthesize the variations in the many schools of Buddhism. In his own country and era, Wŏnhyo's most popular and best-known work seems to have been his *Simmun hwajaeng-ron*, a short essay that advocated an ecumenical perspective on Buddhist doctrine. Hence, the Koreans were as interested as the Chinese in developing all-encompassing systems of Buddhist thought that would reconcile the presumed differences they saw in the teachings.

The scriptural taxonomies explored by thinkers of this period raise in turn a whole set of complementary issues, such as the correct number and classification of the different types of consciousness, several variations of which were presented in Buddhist texts. This controversy related to a number of wider and more fundamental issues in Buddhist ontology and soteriology, such as whether the mind was inherently pure or defiled, or whether enlightenment was intrinsic or extrinsic to the mind—in many ways the Buddhist analogue of the Mencius/Hsün-tzu debate in indigenous Chinese philosophy over whether human nature was inherently good or evil.⁷ Resolving these issues would have enormous implications for the sinic Buddhist worldview and the soteriological stratagems the tradition would adopt.

The mature East Asian schools that formed during the sixth and seventh centuries rejected what they perceived as the world-renouncing tendencies of the so-called Hinayāna branch of Indian Buddhism. In its stead, they fa-

⁶ For the traditional Hua-yen taxonomy, see Ming-wood Liu, "The *P'an-chiao* System of the Hua-yen School in Chinese Buddhism," pp. 10–47.

⁷ See Whalen Lai's discussion in "The Pure and the Impure: The Mencian Problematik in Chinese Buddhism," esp. p. 305.

vored the basic humaneness of Mahāyāna, as enunciated in its clarion call of compassion toward and liberation for everyone, not merely an elite cadre of religious specialists. Tathāgatagarbha thought, based on the inherence of enlightenment in all sentient beings, would be used to justify this ideal of universal salvation. At the same time, the East Asians demanded a workable program for pursuing this ideal. If enlightenment was to be truly accessible to all types of people—cenobites and laypeople alike—some way had to be found to make it coextensive with ordinary life. The East Asians would eventually go so far as to claim that the mundane world was itself the ground of enlightenment. Spiritual attainment thus need not be envisaged as a state of otherworldly transcendence, but as the realization of the multivalent web of interrelationships connecting the individual to his environment and his fellow man—what the Hua-yen school would term the “unimpeded interpenetration of all phenomena” (*shih-shih wu-ai*). True bodhisattva action on behalf of all beings could then mean simply fulfilling one’s social obligations and filial duties, without demanding that the individual abandon his place in the world. In this wise, enlightenment was made accessible in the here and now, without requiring that the adept complete an elaborate regimen of learning and meditation. Rather, living an examined life could be sufficient in itself to reveal instantly the enlightened purity at one’s noetic core—the notion of “sudden enlightenment” (*tun-wu*) that would inspire so many of the East Asian schools of Buddhism.

Written during the late decades of the seventh century, the *Vajrasamādhi* presents one cross-section of the debates concerning philosophy and practice occurring at this crucial juncture in the evolution of the indigenous schools of sinic Buddhism. This sūtra will have much to tell us concerning the theoretical uses of the seminal notions of tathāgatagarbha and amalavijñāna (“immaculate consciousness”) in East Asian Buddhism, and particularly about their soteriological roles. The interest of its author in the notion of vajrasamādhi will be seen as an attempt to reveal the praxis aspects of tathāgatagarbha and amalavijñāna, transforming them from abstract philosophical theories into pragmatic tools of practice. The author of the *Vajrasamādhi*, too, like many indigenous Buddhist thinkers, was also attempting to find a way to bring together the different teachings of Buddhism into a coherent whole, which could be both consistent philosophically as well as viable in practice. The syncretic orientation of the text seems to have attracted the interest of the Silla Koreans, and especially Wŏnhyo. I seek in this chapter to place the innovations made in the *Vajrasamādhi* in the context of the ongoing debates concerning ontology and soteriology then taking place in East

Asian Buddhism. Because of space considerations, I will be content to provide only the modicum of background necessary to clarify the perspectives of the *Vajrasamādhi* and the contributions it makes to these debates.

Tathāgatagarbha and the Immanence of Enlightenment

Perhaps most prominent among the reasons for the *Vajrasamādhi*'s renown in East Asian Buddhism has been its treatment of the concept of tathāgatagarbha (womb [or embryo] of buddhahood). This feature of the text has attracted considerable attention from traditional Buddhist exegetes as well as contemporary scholars.⁸

Tathāgatagarbha proposes to explain how it is possible for ordinary, deluded beings to attain what they presume to be the rarified state of enlightenment. Its explanation for this achievement is less a solution than a dissolution: Tathāgatagarbha thought seeks to skirt the issue entirely by denying the reality of ignorance, positing instead that the mind is intrinsically luminous but dulled by adventitious defilements.⁹ Since defilements remain forever extrinsic to the mind's true, enlightened nature, the individual has actually never been deluded at all; that presumption of ignorance is nothing more than a mistaken belief produced by unsystematic attention (*ayoniśo-manaskāra*). Enlightenment therefore involves nothing more than relinquish-

⁸ Among modern scholars, Takasaki Jikidō in his pioneering survey of Indian Tathāgatagarbha literature notes that the treatment of this theory in Sinitic apocryphal texts, specifically *Awakening of Faith* and *VS*, is one area that still remains to be explored. See Takasaki Jikidō, *Nyoraijō shisō no keisei*, p. 774. For the varying analyses of the Sanskrit compound tathāgatagarbha, see David Seyfort Ruegg, *La Théorie du Tathāgatagarbha et du Gotra*, pp. 507–14. Ruegg's study, while extremely valuable, draws almost exclusively on Sanskrit sources and their Tibetan commentarial interpretations, which are not always relevant to East Asian developments.

⁹ In this regard, tathāgatagarbha builds on an ancient strand in Buddhist thought, of which the locus classicus is the oft-quoted statement in *Aṅguttara-nikāya* 1.10: "The mind, oh monks, is luminous but defiled by adventitious defilements" (*pabhassaram idaṃ bhikkhave cittaṃ, tañ ca kho āgantukehi upakkilesehi upakkilittṭham*). While this passage is discussed in much of the relevant secondary literature, its implications for Buddhist spiritual cultivation are brought out best in two fascinating books by Bhikkhu Ñānananda, which deserve wider recognition: *Concept and Reality in Early Buddhist Thought*, esp. p. 58; and *The Magic of the Mind. An Exposition of the Kalākārāma Sutta*, pp. 83ff. Similar passages can also be found in other Mahāyāna materials. The *Aṣṭasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra* (1.5) says, for example, "When a Bodhisattva courses in perfect wisdom and develops it, he should so train himself so that he does not pride himself on that thought of enlightenment. That thought is no thought, since in its essential original nature thought is transparently luminous." See Edward Conze, trans., *The Perfection of Wisdom in Eight Thousand Lines and Its Verse Summary*, p. 84.

ing one's misperception that one is ignorant and accepting one's true state;¹⁰ there need be no complex procedures or curricula to follow—no *mārga* or *tao*, such as are taught in most schools of Buddhism. Tathāgatagarbha thought as it evolved in East Asia thus provides the ontological justification for the Mahāyāna ideal of universal salvation, as well as the theoretical underpinnings for a viable subitist approach to enlightenment. It is for these reasons that Tathāgatagarbha thought proved to be immensely popular with sinic exegetes.

Tathāgatagarbha's exclusive focus on the reality of enlightenment, however, leads to near-total neglect of the equally compelling problem of the origin of ignorance. If the mind is inherently enlightened, as Tathāgatagarbha doctrine claims, then whence does ignorance arise? Or, to phrase the question in slightly different terms, if the mind is inherently pure, then why would it ever come to appear as if tainted by the defilements? This problem is the Buddhist parallel of the issue of theodicy, which is so compelling in monotheistic religions: that is, how to justify the goodness and omnipotence of God in the face of apparently intractable or unwarranted suffering. To allay this tension between enlightenment and nonenlightenment in Buddhism, some explanation of the process by which enlightened beings come to conceive themselves as deluded had to be found. The problem of the origin of ignorance is addressed in a second major Mahāyāna philosophy of mind: the ālayavijñāna (storehouse consciousness) doctrine of the Yogācāra school. Yogācāra posited that the mind served as a repository of all of one's past experiences, both unwholesome and wholesome. This "storehouse" was considered to be an eighth type of consciousness, which "stored" the seeds (*bīja*) of both defilement and purity. Given the Buddhist abhorrence of any philosophical concept resembling a first cause, the religion has typically treated ignorance as having no beginning, though it may be brought to an end (in enlightenment). Hence, left untrained, following its own inveterate tendencies, the mind would forever tend toward unwholesomeness; thus its "storehouse" has a veritable infinity of time to collect an infinity of impure seeds. These seeds would have to be removed to produce the total purity that is enlightenment. To effect this change, the individual must be instructed in the necessity of cultivating constructive types of action, so as to

¹⁰ See Takasaki, trans., *Ratnagotravibhāga*, pp. 22–23. A number of Tathāgatagarbha sūtras and śāstras state that enlightenment, or the absolute aspect of existence (*paramārtha*), is accessible only through faith (*adhimukti*); see David Seyfort Ruegg, "On the Knowability and Expressibility of Absolute Reality in Buddhism," pp. 495–89 [sic]

begin producing the wholesome seeds that would sanitize the mind *cum* storehouse.

The ālayavijñāna theory thus posits that mental purity is not innate: that process of decontamination begins outside the mind, by “hearing the dharma”—that is, learning about religious praxis. The mind in the Yogācāra system is incapable of generating its own deliverance, as Tathāgatagarbha presumed: enlightenment instead involved a radical transformation of the mind through an external catalyst, so that all the seeds of defilement are eventually removed and the mind remains filled exclusively with pure seeds. This could involve a long, tedious process of practice; indeed, the standard mārga outlined in the *Yogācārabhūmi-śāstra* was said to take three *asaṃkhye-yakalpas* (incalculable eons) to complete—the Buddhist euphemism for an infinity.¹¹ One can sympathize with the East Asians who wondered whether this system held out any real hope of ever achieving enlightenment. The diametrical opposition between these two Mahāyāna philosophies of mind may be schematized as follows:

Tathāgatagarbha	Ālayavijñāna
origin of enlightenment	origin of ignorance
enlightenment intrinsic	enlightenment extrinsic
mind innately pure	mind innately impure
defilements extrinsic	defilements intrinsic

Buddhism was thus faced with two radically different perspectives on Mahāyāna ontology and soteriology and two variant solutions to the Problematik of defilement and purity. How was this philosophical dilemma to be resolved?

Initial, unsystematic attempts at reconciling these two theories are made in a few early Indian Mahāyāna texts. The *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra*, for example, explicitly equates the two by saying that “the ālayavijñāna is called the tathāgatagarbha.”¹² According to the *Laṅkāvatāra*’s analysis, the ālayavijñāna as

¹¹ The different issues addressed by these two philosophies of mind were first discussed by D. T. Suzuki in his *Studies in the Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra*, pp. 261ff. There he describes the cause of the wholesome, and thus the pure aspect of the mind, as tathāgatagarbha, the cause of the unwholesome, and thus impurity, as ālayavijñāna. My characterization in this section of this philosophical Problematik in sinitic Mahāyāna thought is drawn from Peter N. Gregory, “The Problem of Theodicy in the *Awakening of Faith*,” pp. 63–78, and Robert Gimello, “Chih-yen (602–668) and the Foundations of Hua-yen Buddhism,” pp. 212–77.

¹² *Ju Leng-ch’ieh ching* 7, T 671.16.556b29–c1; cf. Suzuki, trans., *Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra*, p. 190.

tathāgatagarbha is originally pure and catalyzes the production of all wholesome actions, while the tathāgatagarbha as ālayavijñāna serves as the storehouse of unwholesome impulses (*vāsanā*) and is thus defiled. Hence, “the tathāgatagarbha is the cause for both the wholesome and the unwholesome; therefore it can serve as the cause for birth and death in the six destinies.”¹³ Even though the mind as tathāgatagarbha may be innately pure, it is so obscured by the conceptualizing tendencies of mind (*parikalpa*) and the attachment to the things of the mundane world (*abhiniveśa*) that the hapless individual mistakenly believes he in truth is defiled. The false impressions created by that fundamental perceptual error are retained, that is, “stored,” in the ālayavijñāna. It is through a transformation (*parāvṛtti*) of one’s perception that this deception is corrected and the innate purity and integrality of the tathāgatagarbha restored. Such a transformation principally involves abandoning the inveterate tendency to perceive things always from the point of view of oneself—what the Buddhists term the ego-conceit (*asmimāna*). Finally reinstated to its originally pristine state, the mind is now known in its pure guise as tathāgatagarbha and transcends the dichotomy between production and extinction that governs the workings of the mundane world.¹⁴ The *Laṅkāvatāra* thus accepts the Yogācāra solution to the origin of ignorance while nevertheless positing that that origin was nothing more than a false construct, in keeping with Tathāgatagarbha theory.

It was, however, in East Asia that the most sustained attempts to synthesize these two disparate philosophies of mind were made. East Asian Buddhists seem to have been especially attracted to the tathāgatagarbha concept because of its potential for justifying philosophically their concern with the immanence of enlightenment.¹⁵ Thus, while Tathāgatagarbha thought never developed into a full-blown school in Indian Mahāyāna, it was at the core of most of the sinic schools of Buddhism, from Hua-yen to Ch’an. Elaborations of this strand of Mahāyāna are also found in many sinic apocryphal compositions—especially the *Awakening of Faith*, probably composed during the third quarter of the sixth century, and the *Vajrasamādhi*. Because of

See also the discussion in Shimizu Yōkō, “Nyūryōgakyō no shiki no sansōsetsu ni tsuite: nyōraizō to arayashiki no dōshi o megutte,” pp. 162–63.

¹³ *Ju Leng-ch’ieh ching* 7, T 671.16.556b23–24; see Suzuki, trans., *Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra*, p. 190. The six destinies are gods, aśuras, humans, animals, hungry ghosts, and hell denizens.

¹⁴ For the soteriological process of the *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra*, see Suzuki, trans., *Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra*, pp. 190–92, *Studies*, pp. 182–86, and cf. pp. 105–106; see also *Ju Leng-ch’ieh ching* 7, T 671.16.556b–557a.

¹⁵ For a discussion of this characteristic of the sinicized schools of Buddhism, see Gimello, “Chih-yen,” pp. 93–119.

the importance to the *Vajrasamādhi* of ideas that first appear in the *Awakening of Faith*, it is worth examining briefly that treatise's solution to the ālaya-vijñāna/tathāgatagarbha problem.

The *Awakening of Faith* attempts to merge Tathāgatagarbha and Yogācāra thought by positing that the one mind may be bifurcated for heuristic purposes into two aspects: the true-thusness (*chen-ju*; Kor. *chinyō*) and production-and-extinction (*sheng-mieh*; Kor. *saengmyōl*) aspects, corresponding respectively to ultimate (*paramārtha*) and conventional (*saṃvṛti*) truths, or the unconditioned (*asaṃskṛta*) and conditioned (*saṃskṛta*) realms. Thusness (*tathatā*) is in turn also twofold: empty of either self-nature or defilements, but also full of the myriads of wholesome qualities that comprise enlightenment.¹⁶ This characterization of the absolute aspect of mind as being both empty and full is a clear indication that true thusness is construed as the equivalent of the tathāgatagarbha, for which a similar distinction is also known from Indian scriptures.¹⁷ This same equation of thusness and tathāgatagarbha is also drawn in the main Indian treatise on Tathāgatagarbha thought, *Ratnagotravibhāga*, where tainted thusness (*samalā tathatā*) is tathāgatagarbha while untainted thusness (*nirmalā tathatā*) is the realization of the dharmakāya.¹⁸

In addition to being simply thus, however, the one mind is also said to be subject to “production and extinction,” one of the ways in which the Chinese translated the Indian term *saṃsāra*, the ordinary realm that is subject to continual life and death. This conventional aspect is the ālayavijñāna, which *Awakening of Faith* defines as “the intersection (*ho-ho*) of that which is not subject to production and extinction [the absolute] with that which is subject to production and extinction [the phenomenal, in such a way that] they are neither one nor different.”¹⁹ But because *Awakening of Faith* states explicitly that “the production-and-extinction aspect of mind [= ālaya-vijñāna] exists on the basis of the tathāgatagarbha,”²⁰ conventional states of mind always retain the potential to be transformed into the absolute mind of true thusness. This transformation takes place through a process of actualization of enlightenment (*shih-chüeh*; Kor. *sigak*)—undertaking religious

¹⁶ *Ch'i-hsin lun*, T 1666.32.576a24–26; Hakeda, trans., *Awakening of Faith*, p. 34.

¹⁷ See, for example, *Sheng-man ching* (*Śrīmālādevīsīmaṇāda-sūtra*), T 353.12.221c16–18; Wayman and Wayman, trans., *Lion's Roar*, p. 99.

¹⁸ Takasaki, trans., *Ratnagotravibhāga*, p. 187; cf. *Chiu-ching i-sheng pao-hsing lun 2*, T 1611.31.827a1–4.

¹⁹ *Ch'i-hsin lun*, T 1666.32.576b8–9; after Gregory's translation in “Theodicy,” p. 73

²⁰ *Ch'i-hsin lun*, T 1666.32.576b8.

cultivation, specifically calmness and insight meditation (*chih-kuan*; Kor. *chigwan*; Skt. *śamatha-vipaśyanā*), and no-thought (*wu-nien*; Kor. *munyŏm*) practice. At the completion of this actualization process, however, one realizes that the enlightenment one has achieved through practice is in fact identical to the enlightened dharmakāya that has always been innate—what the text terms “original enlightenment” (*pen-chüeh*; Kor. *pon’gak*). The difference between these two types of enlightenment is but a matter of perception: the innate luminosity and purity of the tathāgatagarbha and dharmakāya are seen as “original” (viz., “intrinsic”) by the saints, but as something that must be “actualized” by the ordinary person.

The *Awakening of Faith*’s uses of tathāgatagarbha and ālayavijñāna differ somewhat from those found in Indian materials. Tathāgatagarbha, as seen previously, would typically be construed as more concerned with soteriological issues—the possibility of enlightenment. The *Awakening of Faith*, however, gives it more of an ontological bent: tathāgatagarbha is the singular reality of absolute existence as seen by both the deluded individual (viz., as tathāgatagarbha) and the enlightened saint (viz., as dharmakāya). In an Indian Buddhist context, the ālayavijñāna is usually more concerned with issues of ontology, since it provides the justification for the individual’s existence in the world of saṃsāra. But in the *Awakening of Faith* the ālayavijñāna is instead treated soteriologically as original and actualized enlightenment. Hence, the convergences between tathāgatagarbha and ālayavijñāna in the *Awakening of Faith* ultimately force the collapse of ontology into soteriology: mastery of the conventional production-and-extinction realm (= ālayavijñāna) through the actualization of enlightenment leads back full circle to the original enlightenment that is absolute thusness (= tathāgatagarbha).²¹ In turn, soteriology is given an ontological grounding not found in Indian Tathāgatagarbha theory, providing a means of justifying the sinic view that the ordinary world could serve as the ground of enlightenment.

When the deluded sentient being finally completes the process of actualizing his enlightenment, he finds that his ordinary state of mind is nothing more than his intrinsic enlightenment that has always been present. Just as from the absolute standpoint of the saint the potential for enlightenment represented by the tathāgatagarbha is seen in its full glory as dharmakāya, from the conventional standpoint of the ordinary person the state of saṃsāra

²¹ My analysis here of the synthesis created in *Awakening of Faith* between tathāgatagarbha and ālayavijñāna is inspired by Peter Gregory’s “The Problem of Theodicy in the *Awakening of Faith*,” though my placement of the various categories differs slightly.

is “revised” through the process of actualization of enlightenment until it is seen in its full glory as nirvāṇa. This hermeneutic allows the author of the *Awakening of Faith* to merge the teachings of tathāgatagarbha and ālayavijñāna: “The mind, though pure in its self nature from the beginning [= true-thusness aspect, or tathāgatagarbha], is accompanied by ignorance [= production-and-extinction aspect, or ālayavijñāna].”²² The relationship between these two aspects of mind in *Awakening of Faith* is diagrammed in figure 3.1.

The *Awakening of Faith*’s treatment of tathāgatagarbha and ālayavijñāna was extremely influential in the composition of the *Vajrasamādhi*. Written approximately one century before the sūtra, we know that *Awakening of Faith* influenced the *Vajrasamādhi*, not vice versa. But the traditional exegetes were unaware of this chronology and regarded the *Vajrasamādhi* as the scriptural source of the one-mind/two-aspects hermeneutic outlined in the *Awakening of Faith*. This scenario was eminently plausible to the East Asian commentators, since śāstras like the *Awakening of Faith* were considered to be the elaboration of ideas originally preached by the Buddha in the sūtras. Wōnhyo located the source of this hermeneutic in the following passage in chapter 2 of the *Vajrasamādhi*: “The nature of the mind of sentient beings is originally void and calm. The essence of the mind that is void and calm is free from form and characteristics.”²³ In his exegesis of this passage, Wōnhyo interprets “void and calm” as the one mind, “the mind of sentient beings” as the production-and-extinction aspect, and “free from form and characteristics” as the true-thusness aspect. But because the production-and-extinction aspect is that through which the true-thusness aspect is revealed, the *Vajrasamādhi* says that “the nature of the mind of sentient beings is originally void and calm.” However, Wōnhyo clarifies, “the essences of those two aspects are nondual and, therefore, they are both nothing more than the dharma of the one mind.”²⁴ This “dharma of the one mind,” which is the tathāgatagarbha, is then said to be “calm and motionless”—characteristics identical to those attributed to the vajrasamādhi, the special absorption after which the text is named.²⁵ Wōnhyo finally sees the sūtra culminating in a thoroughgoing fusion of all Buddhist teachings in the tathāgatagarbha,²⁶ il-

²² *Ch’i-hsin lun*, T 1666.32.577c2–3; Hakeda, trans., p. 50

²³ *VS*, chap. 2, after n. 12.

²⁴ *KSGR* 1, p. 966a4–9.

²⁵ For the passages see respectively *VS*, chap. 2, after n. 15; *VS*, chap. 1, before n. 3.

²⁶ *KSGR* 1, p. 963c8.

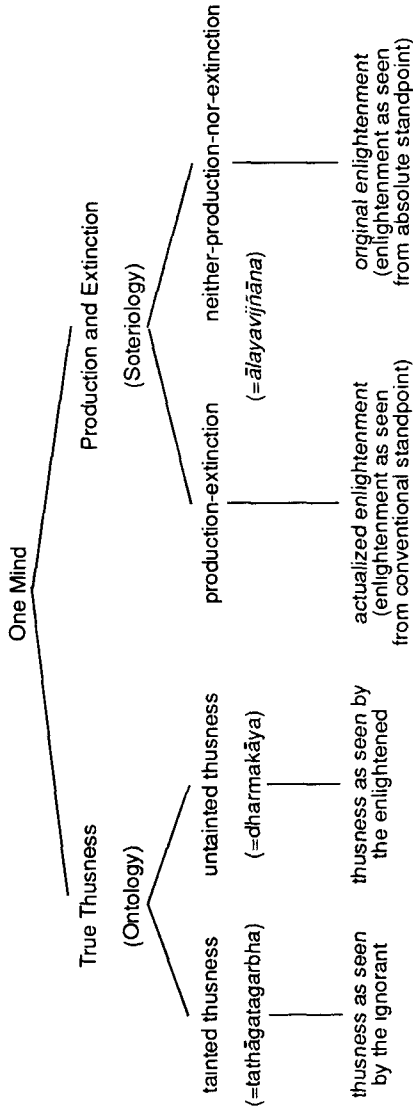


FIGURE 3.1. The One Mind and Its Two Aspects

lustrating that he considered Tathāgatagarbha thought to be the very core of the text.

Wōnhyo similarly found in chapter 4 of the *Vajrasamādhi* the scriptural basis for the *Awakening of Faith's* crucial twofold gnoseology of “original enlightenment” and “actualized enlightenment”:

The original enlightenment of each and every sentient being is constantly enlightening all sentient beings by means of that one enlightenment, prompting them all to regain their original enlightenment. They become enlightened to the fact that all the affective consciousnesses are void, calm, and unproduced.²⁷

In Wōnhyo's interpretation,

This passage gives a thorough elucidation of the two kinds of enlightenments: original and actualized. “The original enlightenment of each and every sentient being” is the meaning of original enlightenment. “They become enlightened to the fact that all the affective consciousnesses are void, calm, and unproduced” is the meaning of actualized enlightenment. This [juxtaposition of phrases] elucidates the fact that the actualized enlightenment is in fact identical to the original enlightenment.”²⁸

It is also interesting to note that Wōnhyo has managed to find actualized enlightenment in the *Vajrasamādhi*, even though the term, while perhaps implicit in the above passage, is never explicitly mentioned anywhere. When a text served their purposes, East Asian exegetes often displayed an uncanny ability to find what they needed, no matter how vague the reference. Even given this caveat, it is clear that the *Vajrasamādhi* contained enough points of

²⁷ *VS*, chap. 4, at n. 33. Original enlightenment, in fact, is an indigenous Chinese term, which appears in sūtra literature only in sinitic apocrypha; Lewis Lancaster, “Buddhist Apocryphal Words.”

²⁸ *KSGR* 2, 978a23–26; cf. Chu-chen, *T'ung-tsung chi*, pp. 256d–257a. Yüan-ch'eng (*Chuchieh* 2, p. 199b13–16) takes a somewhat different tack to this passage: “Because the previous fifth, sixth, and seventh consciousnesses are [marked by] mundane characteristics, they are affective consciousnesses. The eighth consciousness then contains both the mundane and transcendental. The ninth consciousness alone is transcendental. This passage means that one transmutes these mundane affective consciousnesses so that they access the transcendental pure nature.” Yüan-ch'eng's reading of this passage is an apparent attempt to resurrect the southern Ti-lun school's bifurcation of the ālayavijñāna into both pure and impure aspects. This reading cannot be supported by *VS*, however, since in the following exchange Muju Bodhisattva states unequivocally that all eight consciousnesses are mundane (“Each and every one of the eight consciousnesses all arise conditioned by the sense spheres”).

resonance with the *Awakening of Faith* to evoke for Wōnhyo that śāstra's distinctive teachings. Given the telling Tathāgatagarbha orientation of both texts, it should come as no surprise that Wōnhyo would view them as having a single pedigree.

The nonduality of the original and actualized enlightenments, such as was posited in the *Awakening of Faith*, is also upheld in the *Vajrasamādhi*. A passage elsewhere in the fourth chapter states:

When one is enlightened to the fact that thoughts are unproduced, one's mind becomes calm and serene. That is the inspiration of original enlightenment. That inspiration is motionless.²⁹

Wōnhyo tells us in his exegesis:

“That is the inspiration of original enlightenment” [expresses] the understanding that there is no difference between actualized enlightenment and original enlightenment. As a śāstra [*Awakening of Faith*] states, “If there is a person who gains no-thought, he then knows the characteristics of the mind—its production, duration, decay, and extinction—because these [four characteristics] are all equal in [the state of] no-thought. And yet, in fact, there is no difference between the actualized enlightenment [and the state of original enlightenment that is realized through this attainment of no-thought]. This is because, when these four characteristics exist [i.e., function] in succession, they do not operate independently [because they each can be defined only in reference to each other]. They are originally equal and are identical to the one enlightenment.”³⁰

Comment: [The statement] “in fact, there is no difference between the actualized enlightenment . . .” explains the passage in the *Vajrasamādhi* that this “is the inspiration of original enlightenment.” “When these four characteristics exist in succession, they do not operate independently. They are originally equal . . .”: this explains the passage in this sūtra “that inspiration is motionless.”³¹

Wōnhyo also perceives in chapter 2 the antecedents of original and actualized enlightenments in two different perspectives the *Vajrasamādhi* advocates toward the voidness of all phenomena. The *Vajrasamādhi* says:

²⁹ VS, chap. 4, after n. 47.

³⁰ For the relevant passage, see *Ch'i-hsin lun*, T 1666.32.576c1–4; Hakeda, trans., *Awakening*, p. 40.

³¹ KSGR 2, p. 982a2–10.

It enables all those sentient beings to leave behind mind and self, for both mind and self are originally void and calm. If they attain voidness of mind, then that mind will not illusorily project anything. Free from all illusory projections, they will then attain nonproduction.³²

Wŏnhyo explicates this process in terms of the original and actualized enlightenments. The first part of the passage, “if they attain voidness of mind, then that mind will not illusorily project anything,” refers to original enlightenment.

When one penetrates to the fact that the mind and self are void, one straightaway obtains the void and calm mind of original enlightenment. This void and calm mind originally leaves behind the clinging subject, and because the clinging subject is left behind, there are fundamentally no illusory projections. No illusory projections means that there is no more deception or falsity.

Actualized enlightenment is described in the passage “free from illusory projections, they will then attain nonproduction.”

When one gains this void and calm mind of original enlightenment, the discriminations [wrought by] the clinging subject are no longer produced. This is because, in accordance with the mental state that is thereby achieved, there are no longer any illusory projections. . . . In this wise, the unproduced state of mind achieved via actualized [enlightenment] corresponds to that principle which is originally void, calm, and unmodifiable.³³

The *Vajrasamādhi*'s analysis of tathāgatagarbha also recalls a distinction the *Awakening of Faith* makes between the calm, unchanging essence of the mind (*t'i*; Kor. *ch'e*) and its active, adaptable functioning (*yung*; Kor. *γong*). In chapter 7, the tathāgatagarbha is equated with the “original edge of reality” (*pon silche/pen shih-chi*) that is beyond all distinctions—the equivalent of original enlightenment, or the essence. But tathāgatagarbha is also the active functioning of that original enlightenment—the “beneficial power of that fundamental faculty”—which induces the adept to access his inherent enlightenment. By completing three types of practice, the cultivator is certain to “access the tathāgatagarbha.” Accessing the tathāgatagarbha brings in

³² *VS*, chap. 2, at n. 12.

³³ *KSGR* 1, p. 965c3–21.

turn four kinds of knowledge: fixed knowledge, which accords with thusness; adaptable knowledge, which applies the appropriate expedients necessary to overcome defilements; nirvāṇic knowledge, which overcomes sensory attachments; and ultimate knowledge, which perfects the path. Once the cultivator is adept at applying these four types of knowledge, he is then able to make use of “three great matters”: recognition of the mutual interfusion of the internal consciousnesses with the external sensory realms; a special type of absorption of mind, the analytical suppression (*pratisamkhyā-nirodha*), which is accessible only to the enlightened; and the ability to cultivate concentration and wisdom in conjunction with the altruistic aspiration of compassion, ensuring that his practice will be to the benefit of both himself and others. The tathāgatagarbha is thus both the “original edge of reality” that is beyond cultivation (= essence), as well as the specific types of wisdom and mystical talents that are the byproducts of enlightenment (= function). In its description of this sequence, however, the *Vajrasamādhi* notes that “accessing the tathāgatagarbha has no access point; it is like [the enigmatic way in which] a sprout matures into a fruit.”³⁴ This caveat ensures that the student will not mistakenly presume that the realization of the immanence of enlightenment is a gradualistic process. Rather, actualization of enlightenment is as ineffable as original enlightenment: both are nondual, in the same way that essence and function are reduced to one in *Awakening of Faith*. Hence, original and actualized enlightenments are both subsumed in the tathāgatagarbha.

The *Vajrasamādhi* also continues the tendency seen previously in *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra* and *Awakening of Faith* to synthesize tathāgatagarbha with ālayavijñāna. The *Awakening of Faith*’s transformation of ālayavijñāna into the true thusness that is tathāgatagarbha is broached in the concluding verse to chapter 7: “Transmuting both the subject and object of clinging,/ He accesses the tathāgatagarbha.”³⁵ “Subject” here may be construed as the ālayavijñāna, the basis for the mistaken belief that there is a perceiving self, while “object” would refer to the myriad of sensory objects into which the world is differentiated by the affective consciousnesses. Once both ālayavijñāna and the sense realms are “transformed” or “evolved” (*parivṛtti*) back

³⁴ This paragraph is a synopsis of *VS*, chap. 7, between n. 113 and n. 118. For the *t’i-yung* distinction in *Awakening of Faith*, see *Ch’i-hsin lun*, T 1666.32.575c; Hakeda, trans., *Awakening*, pp. 29–30. For Wōnhyo’s use of this distinction in explicating the treatise see Sung Bae Park, “A Comparative Study of Wōnhyo and Fa-tsang on the Ta-Ch’eng Ch’i-Hsin Lun,” pp. 579–97.

³⁵ *VS*, chap. 7, after n. 127.

into the natural purity of the mind, the adept will find his original enlightenment restored to its innate condition (“he accesses the tathāgatagarbha”).³⁶

The most precise description of the *Vajrasamādhi*’s interpretation of tathāgatagarbha appears not in the eponymous seventh chapter, but instead in chapter 2, “The Practice of Nonproduction”: “The tathāgatagarbha is that characteristic of discriminative awareness, subject to production and extinction, which conceals the principle (*i/li*) so that it is not made manifest. The nature of the tathāgatagarbha is calm and motionless.”³⁷ This terse yet cogent definition alludes to one of the major aspects of tathāgatagarbha: that of “concealment” (*sam̐dhi/abhisaṃdhi; yin-fū*). Concealment refers to the second of the ten meanings of tathāgatagarbha given in *Fo-hsing lun* (Exposition of the buddha-nature), a treatise on Tathāgatagarbha thought traditionally ascribed to the Indian exegete Vasubandhu, but perhaps composed in China. There, tathāgatagarbha is described as “that store (*garbha*) which conceals and covers.”³⁸ As “Vasubandhu” explains:

The second meaning, “that store which conceals and covers over (*yin-fū*),” means that because *the tathāgata conceals himself so that he does not appear* (Ch. *tsu-yin pu-hsien*; Kor. *chayn purhyōn*) [emphasis added], it can be called a “store.” . . . Before the tathāgata-nature comes to reside on the path, it is concealed and covered over by the defilements, so that sentient beings cannot see it. Hence, it is called a “store.”³⁹

“Vasubandhu”’s description here implies two different connotations of concealment: first, the tathāgatagarbha as an active agent of liberation, secreting itself away within the minds of sentient beings so as to motivate them soteriologically; and second, tathāgatagarbha in its more passive sense as concealed, and thus obscured, by the defilements. It is the passive denotation that is most commonly seen in Tathāgatagarbha literature, from the earliest

³⁶ This process is discussed in detail in Takasaki, *Nyōraizō shisō*, pp. 196, 770–71. My treatment here is suggested by Wōnhyo’s rather laconic exegesis on this passage; see *KSGR* 3, p. 1001a12–13. Chu-chen’s analysis is slightly different. He takes the object as the “dharma of calm extinction” and the subject as the “mind of nirvāna” *T’ung-tsung chi* 10, p. 285c.

³⁷ *VS*, chap. 2, before n. 16. Wōnhyo takes the first half of the definition (“that characteristic of discriminative awareness, subject to production and extinction”) as the void tathāgatagarbha and the second half (“conceals the principle so that it is not made manifest”) as the nonvoid tathāgatagarbha. *KSGR* 1, p. 969a10–13.

³⁸ *Fo-hsing lun* 2, T 1610.31.795c24; for the problem of its authorship of *Fo-hsing lun*, see Takasaki, *Ratnagotravibhāga*, p. 47.

³⁹ *Fo-hsing lun* 2, T 1610.31.796a19–20, 23–25.

stratum onward.⁴⁰ In the *Vajrasamādhi*, however, the interpretation tends toward a more active presentation. There the tathāgatagarbha is said to function not as the hapless object that is hidden, but instead as the active agent that conceals the “principle” (= dharmakāya). As the concealer, tathāgatagarbha thus works at revealing that principle to the adept through the process of actualizing his enlightenment, as seen previously.

Wording most clearly evocative of the *Vajrasamādhi*’s active aspect of the tathāgatagarbha is found in Wōnhyo’s commentary to the *Awakening of Faith*. Wōnhyo’s own description of this aspect states: “It is in this aspect [of production and extinction] that the nature of the tathāgata is *concealed and not made manifest* [emphasis added]. This is called the tathāgatagarbha.”⁴¹ This passage differs from that found in the *Vajrasamādhi* by a single, homophonous logograph: for Wōnhyo’s “is concealed and not made manifest” (ḥn i purhyōn) *VS* gives instead “conceals the principle so that it is not made manifest” (ḥni purhyōn). This strong similarity intimates that the author may have been trying to appeal directly to the wording of Wōnhyo’s authoritative commentary in constructing his text, perhaps suggesting that Silla scholars, if not Wōnhyo himself, were the target audience of *VS*.

The second half of the *Vajrasamādhi*’s definition of tathāgatagarbha as “subject to production and extinction” also resonates with a number of other Tathāgatagarbha texts. The *Śrīmālā* says, for example, “Production and extinction [= saṃsāra] depends on the tathāgatagarbha. . . . Because there is a tathāgatagarbha, it is said that there is production and extinction.”⁴² *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra* remarks, “If there were no such thing as a tathāgatagarbha-ālayavijñāna there would be no production and no extinction.”⁴³ But it is *Awakening of Faith* once again that is closest to the language of our text: “Depending on the tathāgatagarbha there exists the mind that is subject to

⁴⁰ The seminal text of the doctrine, the *Tathāgatagarbha-sūtra*, for example, says, “All sentient beings have the tathāgatagarbha . . . which is covered over and hidden (*fu-pi*) by all the defilements.” See *Ta-fang-teng ju-lai-tsang ching*, T 666.16.457c25–26. Another early Tathāgatagarbha scripture, *Śrīmālādevīsīhanāda-sūtra*, offers a similar interpretation of tathāgatagarbha: “this dharmakāya of the tathāgata when not free from the store of defilement (*avinirmuktaśeṣakośa*) is referred to as the tathāgatagarbha.” See *Sheng-man ching*, T 353.12.221c11; rendering by Wayman and Wayman, trans., *Lion’s Roar*, p. 98. This passage, of course, need not imply that dharmakāya and tathāgatagarbha are identical; rather both should be viewed instead as variant aspects of the unitary thusness, where defiled thusness is tathāgatagarbha and undefiled thusness dharmakāya. See Wayman and Wayman, trans., *Lion’s Roar*, p. 98 n. 83.

⁴¹ *Kisillon-so* 1, T 1844.44.206c19–20.

⁴² *Sheng-man ching*, T 353.12.104b.

⁴³ *Ju Leng-ch’ieh ching*, 556c28–29, cf. Suzuki, trans., *Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra*, p. 192.

production and extinction.”⁴⁴ Indeed, the *Vajrasamādhi*’s description of tathāgatagarbha as “a discriminative knowledge subject to production and extinction” seems remarkably parallel to the *Awakening of Faith*, wherein discriminative thought is said to create the false distinctions between dharmas that the ordinary person perceives, creating in turn production and extinction.⁴⁵

The pedigree of the *Vajrasamādhi* as a Tathāgatagarbha text is clearly established by these obvious affinities with the established literature of that branch of Mahāyāna thought. A major advance the sūtra makes in treating the concept is its attempt to bring together more passive descriptions of the tathāgatagarbha as obscured by discriminative thought, with explicit references to it as an active agent that conceals the principle. Tathāgatagarbha in the *Vajrasamādhi* is clearly not a benign force, submissively acquiescing to the vagaries of defilements and discrimination; it instead secrets itself away inside ignorance and taints so as to beckon the benighted, ordinary person toward enlightenment. The clarification the *Vajrasamādhi* provides concerning the soteriological function of tathāgatagarbha, and especially its relationship to original and actualized enlightenments, is helpful too for understanding the East Asian penchant to see enlightenment as immanent in ordinary life. But it is in the nexus the *Vajrasamādhi* creates between the tathāgatagarbha and two related concepts—*amalavijñāna* and *vajrasamādhi*—that its principal contribution to Tathāgatagarbha thought is found.

Amalavijñāna and the Innate Purity of Mind

A concept in the *Vajrasamādhi* closely related to tathāgatagarbha is that of a ninth mode of consciousness beyond the eight ordinarily posited by the Yogācāra school. This is the so-called immaculate consciousness, or *amalavijñāna*. The doctrinal issues raised in treating *amalavijñāna* are closely akin to those discussed in relation to tathāgatagarbha. With *amalavijñāna*, however, the emphasis is not so much on the dichotomy of ignorance and enlightenment as on its corollary of impurity and purity. *Amalavijñāna* stands in much the same relationship to *ālayavijñāna* as did the tathāgatagarbha and may be viewed as the intrusion of Tathāgatagarbha thought into the Yogācāra classification of consciousness. Such classifications were matters of

⁴⁴ *Ch'i-hsin lun*, T 1666.32.576b8

⁴⁵ See *Ch'i-hsin lun*, T 1666.32.576a9–10.

considerable controversy in East Asian Buddhism,⁴⁶ especially between the northern and southern branches of the Chinese Ti-lun school, and the later She-lun (Mahāyānaśaṃgraha) and Fa-hsiang (Yogācāra) schools. The *Vajrasamādhi* provides one of the more trenchant interpretations of the amalavijñāna, and its account is valuable for understanding the connections East Asians drew between Tathāgatagarbha and Yogācāra thought. Let me first outline briefly the development of the amalavijñāna doctrine before turning to the contributions of the *Vajrasamādhi* proper.⁴⁷

The theory of amalavijñāna derives from debates within the so-called idealist branch of Mahāyāna philosophy concerning the nature of the mind as well as the relationship between the subjective realm of consciousness and the objective realms of the senses. The *Daśabhūmika-sūtra*, translated in the fifth century, had stated that the world was nothing more than a projection of the mind (*cittamātram idam yad idam traidhātukam*).⁴⁸ The significance of this position was first explored in Vasubandhu's commentary to this sūtra, the *Shih-ti-ching lun* (**Daśabhūmikasūtrōpadeśa*), commonly known in East Asia by its abbreviated titled, *Ti-lun*, from which the school that emphasized its exegesis derived its name. It was through the *Ti-lun* that the Chinese were introduced to the quintessential concept in the Yogācāra analysis of mind: the ālayavijñāna, the repository within consciousness of the seeds that produced the objective world.

Controversies soon arose, however, over the nature of the ālayavijñāna, which led in turn to debates over the actual number of consciousnesses and their correct classification. Such controversies began in large part because of internal inconsistencies in the *Ti-lun*'s own analysis of the ālayavijñāna. In some places, Vasubandhu suggests that the ālayavijñāna is the tainted source from which saṃsāra, with all its defilements, arises.⁴⁹ Elsewhere, he implies

⁴⁶ In the context of *VS*, one of the more insightful struggles with these different taxonomies of consciousness appears in Chih-yen's (602–668) *Hua-yen wu-shih yao wen-ta* 1, *T* 1869.45.522c–523a. Chih-yen, writing around the same time *VS* is composed and drawing from many of the same sources, suggests that tathāgatagarbha can be described with reference to either an eight- or nine-consciousness taxonomy (p. 522c24–25).

⁴⁷ My account of the significance of these issues is especially indebted to Robert Gimello, "Chih-yen," pp. 212–28, 313–28. Gimello's work is arguably the most insightful and erudite treatment of the sinicization of Buddhist thought to appear in any language. Some of the same material is covered also in Diana Paul, *Philosophy of Mind in Sixth-Century China*, pp. 46–71.

⁴⁸ See *Shih-ti ching* *T* 286.10.514c26; *Shih-ti ching lun*, *T* 1522.26.169a15. See also Gimello, "Chih-yen," p. 291, for further references to Chinese sources and Sanskrit textual variants. Cf. the parallel passage in *Ch'i-hsin lun*, *T* 1666.32.576a5, Hakeda, trans., *Awakening of Faith*, p. 31.

⁴⁹ "Name and form arise in conjunction with the ālayavijñāna." *Shih-ti ching lun* 3, *T* 1522.26.142b13; Gimello, "Chih-yen," p. 287.

instead that thusness (*tathatā*) and the *ālaya* are coextensive, suggesting that the *ālayavijñāna* is fundamentally pure.⁵⁰ Determining the nature of the *ālayavijñāna* would in turn affect the status of the world evolved from that storehouse: is the world produced by a tainted *ālayavijñāna*, and thus intrinsically defiled?; or is it transformed from pristine thusness instead, and thus intrinsically pure? Answering these questions was made all the more difficult by the support for both positions found in other Yogācāra-oriented scriptures translated around the same time as the *Daśabhūmika*, such as the *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra* (T 675) and the *Lañkāvatāra-sūtra* (T 671).

Chinese exegetes in the Ti-lun school fervently debated the nature of the *ālayavijñāna*. The northern branch of the Ti-lun school, deriving from teachers with Yogācāra predilections, is usually depicted as taking the position that the *ālayavijñāna* is fundamentally impure: it is a tainted source that produces only defiled dharmas. This view that the *ālayavijñāna* is intrinsically corrupted later becomes emblematic of the Chinese Yogācāra, or Fa-hsiang, teachings of Hsüan-tsang and K'uei-chi (632–682). In distinction to this position was that of the southern branch of the Ti-lun school, deriving from scholars who had affinities with Tathāgatagarbha thought. While our knowledge of the views of the southern scholiasts is far from adequate, they seem to have placed the *ālayavijñāna* as the last of a sevenfold schema of consciousness, interpreting it as a combination of both pure and impure elements. *Ālayavijñāna* in their view was considered to be the functioning (*yung*) of thusness itself and thus pure; but the *ālaya* was subject to the same law of conditioned origination as were both the “evolutionary” or “transformed” sensory consciousnesses (*chüan-shih*) and all worldly objects, and therefore it could also be considered impure as well.⁵¹ In this issue of purity versus impurity, the philosophical debate over the nature of the *ālayavijñāna* intersects with the strong partiality East Asian exegetes were already displaying toward Tathāgatagarbha thought. The debate thus focusses not solely on the nature of the *ālayavijñāna*, but also on the nexus between *ālayavijñāna* and the tathāgatagarbha, as well as the possible implications of any such interrelationship in developing a viable praxis.

⁵⁰ E.g., “[The eighth-stage bodhisattva] abides well in the suchness of the *ālayavijñāna*”; *Shih-ti-ching lun* 10, T 1522.26.180a20. See the characterization of the ramifications of this debate over the nature of *ālayavijñāna* in Stanley Weinstein, “The Concept of *Ālaya-vijñāna* in Pre-T’ang Chinese Buddhism,” p. 39; Gimello, “Chih-yen,” p. 291.

⁵¹ My account of the varying sectarian positions on the *ālayavijñāna* is indebted to Gimello, “Chih-yen,” pp. 294–97, Weinstein, “*Ālaya-vijñāna*,” pp. 40–43; Paul, *Philosophy of Mind*, pp. 46–52; and Walter Liebenthal, “New Light on the Mahāyāna Śraddhotpāda Śāstra,” pp. 157, 209.

A striking advance in resolving these issues was made by Paramārtha (499–569), an important Indian translator of many seminal works on Yogācāra, Tathāgatagarbha, and Abhidharma philosophy. In his personal writings, Paramārtha condemned the ālayavijñāna as being fundamentally impure, positing instead that only a ninth mode of consciousness—which he termed the amalavijñāna or “immaculate consciousness”—was pure.⁵² The most sustained analysis of the amalavijñāna is made in the She-lun school, an exegetical school that formed around a reading of Paramārtha’s translation of Asaṅga’s *Mahāyānasamgraha* (*She Ta-sheng lun*).

Although present scholarly consensus accepts that the concept of amalavijñāna derives from Paramārtha,⁵³ there is still considerable controversy as to what its Indian antecedents, if any, may have been. David Ruegg has suggested possible parallels between amalavijñāna and the notion of immaculate gnosis (*amalañāna*) found in the Tathāgatagarbha treatise, *Ratnagotravibhāga*, which calls that gnosis stable (*dhruva*), tranquil (*śiva*), eternal (*śāśvata*), and immutable (*acyuta*).⁵⁴ Wōnch’ūk (613–695), a Korean expatriate disciple of Hsüan-tsang and a contemporary of the author of the *Vajrasamādhi*, suggests an Indian Vijñānavāda pedigree through Paramārtha in his *Chieh-shen-mi*

⁵² See Chan-jan’s account of Paramārtha’s role in developing the amalavijñāna concept in *Chih-kuan chüan-hsing ch’uan-hung chüeh* 3a, T 1912.46.221c2–9; quoted in Paul, *Philosophy of Mind*, p. 70. It is principally in an anthology of Paramārtha’s own works, the *Wu-hsiang lun*, that the amalavijñāna is treated; see Paul, p. 94. For a convenient survey of the theory of amalavijñāna as attributed to Paramārtha, see Paul, pp. 6–7, 108–11, 160; and for background on the controversy within Chinese Yogācāra concerning the various schemes of consciousnesses, see Paul, pp. 46–71, summarizing the work of Yūki Reimon, Fukaura Seibun, and Sakaino Kōyō (for which see pp. 196–97 n. 55). Other summaries of amalavijñāna doctrine appear in Ruegg, *Tathāgatagarbha*, pp. 439–44, and Eric Frauwallner, “Amalavijñānam und Ālayavijñānam,” pp. 148–59. Perhaps the most complete treatment of the meaning and significance of the amalavijñāna is found in Fukaura Seibun, *Yuishikigaku kenkyū*, vol. 1, pp. 188–228. For other sources, and Walter Liebenthal’s thoughts on the topic with reference to VS, see Liebenthal, pp. 368–69n.

⁵³ This view that amalavijñāna was the innovation of Paramārtha has been challenged by Yūki Reimon. Yūki suggests instead that the nine-consciousness schema derives instead from a passage in the *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra*, which Ching-ying Hui-yūan used to justify a taxonomy of either eight or nine consciousnesses: “One can also theorize that there are nine [consciousnesses]. This is because the ‘Sagāthākam chapter’ of the *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra* states, ‘The eight or nine types of consciousness are like waves on water.’” *Ta-sheng i chang* 3, T 1851.44.530c8–9; for the *Laṅka* citation see *Ju Leng-ch’ieh ching* 9, T 671.16.565b21; Suzuki, trans., *Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra*, p. 227. See discussion in Yūki Reimon, “Shina Yuishiki gakushijō ni okeru Ryōgashi no chū,” pp. 29, 37–42; and see Weinstein, “Ālaya-vijñāna,” pp. 47 and 50 n. 41; Takamine Ryōshū, *Kegon shisōshi*, pp. 121–23. For general background on the controversy, see Yoshifumi Ueda, “Two Mam Streams of Thought in Yogācāra Philosophy,” pp. 155–65; and Paul, *Philosophy of Mind*, pp. 196–97 n. 55, who rejects Yūki’s argument.

⁵⁴ See discussion in Ruegg, *Tathāgatagarbha*, pp. 440–44, citing *Ratnagotravibhāga* ii.26 (Takasaki, trans., p. 321).

ching shu (Kor. *Haesimmilgyōng-so*; Commentary to the *Samdhinirmocāna-sūtra*): “According to the school of Sthiramati, the ninth *amala*-consciousness is essentially thusness. As object, it is tathatā and the edge of reality (*bhūta-koti*); as subject, it is *amalavijñāna* and original enlightenment.”⁵⁵ Since Paramārtha is presumed to have been a disciple of Sthiramati, it may be that he was taught something at least akin to the idea of *amalavijñāna* during his studies in India. But there is no Sanskrit or Middle Indic source that would clinch the Indian provenance of the term, and Wōnch’ūk may simply have been extrapolating an Indian origin for the concept based on his knowledge of Paramārtha’s heritage.

Paramārtha’s conception of *amalavijñāna* ultimately derives from Tathāgatagarbha thought, which similarly emphasizes the inherent purity of the mind.⁵⁶ Paramārtha used *amalavijñāna* synonymously with the more conventional Yogācāra concept of *pariniṣpanna*, the “perfected nature” of consciousness, indicating that *amalavijñāna* was to be equated with the absolute reality of thusness (tathatā).⁵⁷ *Amalavijñāna* was therefore construed as the very basis of all eight consciousnesses, including the *ālayavijñāna*. *Ālayavijñāna* was conceived instead as merely a provisional description of the mind, which had meaning only in distinction to the other seven delusory consciousnesses. While *ālayavijñāna* served both to counter the mistaken belief that those consciousnesses existed in reality and to account for the arising of ignorance and defilements in the world, *amalavijñāna* was instead truth itself and was realized once the mistaken belief in the reality of the *ālayavijñāna* was corrected.⁵⁸ The *ālayavijñāna* may be the source of defilement and the ontological ground of *saṃsāric* existence, but knowledge of it would not conduce to enlightenment. The *amalavijñāna*, conversely, may have had no explicit ontological role, but it did serve as the principal catalyst of liberation.⁵⁹ One sees from this account that *amalavijñāna* and *tathāgatagarbha*

⁵⁵ *Chieh-shen-mi ching shu*, ZZ 34.360c7–11; translation adapted from Gimello, “Chih-yen,” p. 313; see discussion in Takamine, *Kegon shisōshi*, pp. 90ff. It was through this commentary, which was one of the first exegetical texts translated into Tibetan, that the Tibetans also came to recognize the theory of nine consciousnesses as being ascribed to Paramārtha. See discussion in Inaba Shōju, “On Chos-grub’s Translation of the *Chieh-shên-mi-ching-shu*,” pp. 110–11.

⁵⁶ For the Tathāgatagarbha influence on *amalavijñāna*, see Gimello, “Chih-yen,” pp. 323–28; Paul, *Philosophy of Mind*, pp. 143–45; and Liebenenthal, p. 373 with reference to *VS* in specific.

⁵⁷ “The perfect nature is precisely the *amalavijñāna*”; *Chüan-shih lun*, T 1587.31.62c19; translated, and implications discussed, in Gimello, “Chih-yen,” p. 323; see also Paul, *Philosophy of Mind*, p. 160.

⁵⁸ “It is through counteracting (*tui-chih*) the *ālayavijñāna* that one realizes *amalavijñāna*.” *Chüeh-ting-tsang lun*, T 1584.30.1020b; cited in Gimello, “Chih-yen,” p. 326.

⁵⁹ “The *ālayavijñāna* is the root of all defilements but does not serve as the root of the at-

occupied virtually the same position vis-à-vis the ālayavijñāna. By equating amalavijñāna with *pariniṣpanna* in his discussion of the nature of consciousness, Paramārtha places the tathāgatagarbha at the hierarchical apex of his philosophy of mind. Conceptually, amalavijñāna provides a means of synthesizing these two philosophical filiations of Mahāyāna: as “immaculate,” amalavijñāna emulates the Tathāgatagarbha’s emphasis on the innate purity of the mind; but as a form of “consciousness,” it could be placed within the Yogācāra compartmentalization of the mind as a ninth mode of consciousness. This analysis thence became the hallmark of the She-lun school.

Ching-ying Hui-yüan (523–592), the main disciple of Fa-shang (495–580) in the southern Ti-lun lineage, drew on Paramārtha’s insights to synthesize the variant positions of the Ti-lun and She-lun schools, which emphasized respectively the importance of the ālaya and amala vijñānas.⁶⁰ While essentially equating the two, Hui-yüan, following Paramārtha, is able to distinguish them by saying that ālayavijñāna is true only in distinction to the illusory seven consciousnesses that precede it in the taxonomy; but amalavijñāna, as the basis of enlightenment, is true in and of itself. Thus, “the sole truth is but one: that is, the originally pure amalavijñāna.”⁶¹ But Hui-yüan goes much farther than had Paramārtha in coopting for the amalavijñāna the ālayavijñāna’s role as the ontological substratum of all existence. Hui-yüan notes, for example, that “the mind’s characteristic of true thusness is precisely the ninth consciousness, because the ninth consciousness is the essence of all dharmas.”⁶² Thus, by the end of the sixth century, the amalavijñāna no longer carried principally soteriological overtones but had assumed the ālayavijñāna’s ontological role as well.

The use of amalavijñāna in synthesizing variant tendencies in Mahāyāna philosophy is particularly prominent in the *Vajrasamādhi*. All commentators to the sūtra have drawn attention to the pronounced syncretic focus of the text, and amalavijñāna serves many of the same purposes in the *Vajrasamādhi* as it did in the She-lun school, such as resolving the perceived differences between tathāgatagarbha and ālayavijñāna.

In traditional exegesis the *Vajrasamādhi* was often presumed to have been

tainment of the noble path. It is the amalavijñāna that serves as the support of that noble path.” *Chueh-t’ing-tsang lun*, T 1584.30.1020b; translated in Gimello, “Chih-yen,” p. 326.

⁶⁰ See Weinstein, “*Ālaya-vijñāna*,” pp. 44ff; Gimello, “Chih-yen,” pp. 328–35; Paul, *Philosophy of Mind*, pp. 52–64, 68.

⁶¹ *Ta-sheng i chang* 3, T 1851.44.530c11–14, cited in Gimello, “Chih-yen,” p. 335.

⁶² Hui-yüan, *Ta-sheng ch’i-hsin lun i-shu* 1a, T 1843.44.179a21–22; noted in Gimello, “Chih-yen,” p. 335.

the scriptural source of the concept of amalavijñāna. Wŏnhyo in fact states explicitly that Paramārtha derived the theory of a ninth consciousness from the following passage in chapter 4:

“Lord! Through what inspiring transmutation may one transmute all the affective consciousnesses of sentient beings so that they access the *amala*[*vijñāna*]?”

“All the buddhas, the tathāgatas, constantly transmute all the consciousnesses by means of the one enlightenment so that they will access the *amala*.”⁶³

Wŏnhyo says in explanation,

“All the affective consciousnesses” are precisely the eight consciousnesses. “*Amala*” is the ninth consciousness. The Trepitāka Paramārtha’s theory of the ninth consciousness is based upon this passage [in the *Vajrasamādhi*].⁶⁴

The same claim is found in the *Sōk Mahayōn-ron* (Exegesis of the Mahāyāna), an eighth-century apocryphal commentary to the *Awakening of Faith*, attributed to a Korean monk named Wŏlch’ung (d.u.).⁶⁵ But nowhere in his own works does Paramārtha ever cite the *Vajrasamādhi*, and it remains controversial, as seen previously, that it even was Paramārtha who coined the term amalavijñāna. At the very least, we now know that it was impossible that the *Vajrasamādhi* could have influenced Paramārtha, since the sūtra was composed some one hundred years after his death.

Given the centrality of amalavijñāna in medieval Buddhist intellectual discourse, it is probably inevitable that the concept would appear in a text that partially catered to scholastic interests. The *Vajrasamādhi*, however, has little sustained treatment of amalavijñāna itself, or of its relationship with ālayavijñāna and tathāgatagarbha, such as one might expect if the author’s intent were solely to resolve sectarian controversies over the concept; instead, they seek to orient the discussion toward matters involving actual practice. If rather jejune from a learned standpoint, the text’s analysis of amalavijñāna

⁶³ VS, chap. 4, at n. 32.

⁶⁴ KSGR 2, p. 978a6–8; this has been noted by Ko Ikchin, p. 229 and n. 21

⁶⁵ *Sōk Mahayōn-ron*, T 1668.32.611c23–27. *Sōk Mahayōn-ron* (Ch *Shih Mo-ho-yen lun*; T 1668) is attributed to Nāgārjuna and was alleged to have been translated by Vṛddhimata (d.u.) et al., sometime after A.D. 401. The authenticity of the treatise is discussed by Mochizuki (*Kyōten seiritsu*, pp. 651–70), who concludes that it was written in Korea sometime between 720 and 779, apparently by Wŏlch’ung.

will have important implications for understanding the doctrinal underpinnings of Ch'an meditation.

The *Vajrasamādhi* displays some ambivalence as to the respective nature of the ālaya and amala vijñānas. In chapter 4, the *Vajrasamādhi* portrays all the consciousnesses, up through and including the eighth, as being defiled. These are called "affective consciousnesses" that must be "constantly transmuted so that they will access the *amala*." Whatever special status other texts might accord the ālayavijñāna as the ground of existence, the *Vajrasamādhi* nevertheless relegates it to the same level as the delusory consciousnesses: it is subject to discrimination and thus inextricably bound up with the mundane world of the senses.⁶⁶ This judgment shares close affinities with the She-lun position on the nature of consciousness, which rejected the ālayavijñāna as impure.

Elsewhere, however, the *Vajrasamādhi* is rather less clear-cut concerning the ālayavijñāna's defiled nature. In chapter 5, for example, the eighth and ninth consciousnesses are treated in almost identical terms, both becoming "limpid" and "pure" once the mind is freed from its dichotomizing tendencies (*punbyōl/fen-pieh*; *vikalpa*). After the outflows (*āsrava*) from the ālayavijñāna are stemmed, all discrimination will vanish and the bodhisattva will realize the voidness of dharmas. Through such nondiscriminative wisdom (*mubunbyōl-chi/wu-fen-pieh chih*; *nirvikalpajñāna*), taints are abandoned and the bodhisattva realizes original enlightenment, which is the amalavijñāna. Because the ālayavijñāna is then no longer swayed by sensory experiences, the sixth and seventh consciousnesses, which process those perceptions and interpret them in terms of self, will never arise again either.⁶⁷ None of the sectarian perspectives outlined previously on the nature of the mind seems quite to correspond to what one finds here. If anything, we are closest to the *Awakening of Faith's* interpretation of ālayavijñāna and tathāgatagarbha, in which the ordinary world is conceived as the ground of both ignorance and enlightenment.

Wōnhyo's exegesis treats these two deepest forms of consciousness in terms of the She-lun school's analysis. He explicitly calls the penultimate eighth consciousness the basis of the outflows and equates the ninth consciousness with the original enlightenment, following a tautology drawn in

⁶⁶ "Each and every one of the eight consciousnesses is produced conditioned by the sense realms." *VS*, chap. 4, at n. 34.

⁶⁷ *VS*, chap. 5, at n. 82. My interpretation follows *KSGR* 2, p. 989b22–26.

the *Vajrasamādhi* itself.⁶⁸ Looking back at the ambiguous passages in the *Vajrasamādhi* in the light of Wōnhyo's treatment, we see that amalavijñāna *cum* original enlightenment is the force that renders enlightenment accessible. As chapter 4 says, "The original enlightenment of each and every sentient being is constantly enlightening all sentient beings . . . , prompting them all to regain their original enlightenment."⁶⁹ Wōnhyo also notes in his *Kisillon pyōlgi* (Autocommentary to the *Awakening of Faith*) that "because of the influence of original enlightenment, [deluded thoughts] come to have a modicum of enlightened function (*kagyong/chüeh-yung*)."⁷⁰ The amalavijñāna as original enlightenment is therefore constantly acting on sentient beings, exerting a beneficial influence that ultimately will prompt those beings to rediscover their inherent enlightenment. This treatment of amalavijñāna as the catalyst of enlightenment corresponds to the active interpretation of the tathāgatagarbha followed elsewhere in the *Vajrasamādhi*.

The *Vajrasamādhi*'s discussion of amalavijñāna supports the view that this concept has its antecedents in Tathāgatagarbha, rather than Yogācāra, thought.⁷¹ It also confirms the close association between amalavijñāna and the tathāgatagarbha that was such an important factor in Paramārtha's writings and in the She-lun analysis of consciousness. But the *Vajrasamādhi* is most concerned with the soteriological, rather than ontological, import of the term. These implications are brought out more fully in a passage in chapter 6, where the author incorporates the theory of amalavijñāna into his comprehensive mārga schema, similar to that which is in the Hwaōm/Hua-yen school.

True thusness has voidness as its nature. As its nature is void, its knowledge is empyreal, incinerating all the fetters. In an equipoised and balanced manner, the three stages of equal enlightenment (*tūnggak/teng-chüeh*) and the three bodies of sublime enlightenment (*myogak/miao-chüeh*) shine brilliantly in the ninth consciousness so that there are no shadows.⁷²

The treatment of the amalavijñāna here in terms of equal and sublime enlightenments is closely allied to that found in another Chinese apocryphon, the *P'u-sa ying-lo pen-yeh ching* (Book of the original actions that adorn the

⁶⁸ "Original enlightenment is exactly the amalavijñāna"; *KSGR* 2, 978a20.

⁶⁹ *VS*, chap. 4, at n. 33.

⁷⁰ *Kisillon pyōlgi* 1, T 1845.44.230a19–21.

⁷¹ Liebenthal, p. 373, first broached this suggestion with reference to *VS*.

⁷² *VS*, chap. 6, at n. 96.

bodhisattva).⁷³ Our text, like that indigenous sūtra, attempts to synthesize the variant mārga schemata presented in translated Buddhist texts into a comprehensive regimen, which culminates in the two levels of enlightenment: equal and sublime, which the *Ying-lo ching* calls the Immaculate Stage (*wu-kou ti*; *amalabhūmi*?) and Sublime-training Stage (*miao-hsüeh ti*).⁷⁴ By treating amalavijñāna in terms of specific soteriological stages, the *Vajrasamādhi* raises the discussion of that consciousness beyond mere psychological abstraction to concrete religious praxis.

Wōnhyo's exegesis of this passage makes associations between these two final stages of the mārga and the ālaya and amala *vijñānas*, helping to clarify in the process the relationship between those two modes of consciousness:

The prior level of equal enlightenment still involves the fountainhead of the mind that has yet to exhaust production and extinction; hence, it involves the eighth consciousness. Arriving now at sublime enlightenment, production and extinction are forever left behind, and one returns to the fountainhead of the one mind of original enlightenment. Thus he accesses the brightness and purity inherent in the ninth consciousness. . . . Now, returning to the fountainhead of the mind, that original substance becomes one's essence and, due to this, all "shadows"—all characteristics—become extinct.⁷⁵

The correlation the *Vajrasamādhi* makes between amalavijñāna and the mārga shows that the idea of an immaculate form of consciousness was not merely an abstract psychological concept, but a concrete soteriological tool—the motivating force that renders ordinary people capable of enlightenment. Like the tathāgatagarbha, amalavijñāna was not primarily intended to explain why a person mistakenly believes himself to be deluded (i.e., to function as the origin of ignorance), or to serve as the ground of existence (i.e., to play an ontological role)—two of the ways in which East Asian exegeses had employed the ālayavijñāna concept. Once amalavijñāna was actualized, the student would learn that it has always been present, subtly influencing the individual—that is, it was original enlightenment. This clarification of the soteriological implications of this ninth mode of con-

⁷³ *P'u-sa ying-lo pen-yeh ching*, T 1485.24.1012c27–1013a9 For the Chinese provenance of this text, see Mochizuki, *Bukkyō kyōten*, pp. 471–84.

⁷⁴ See *P'u-sa ying-lo pen-yeh ching* 2, T 1485 24.1017a3, 1010b278, 1022b13; cited in Liebenthal, p. 362 n. 1.

⁷⁵ *KSGR* 3, 995c25–27; and cf. Chu-chen, *T'ung-tsung chi* 9, p. 277c; Yuan-ch'eng, *Chuchieh* 2, p. 212a–b.

sciousness may be the most important innovation in the *Vajrasamādhi*'s treatment of both amalavijñāna and tathāgatagarbha.

But the author does not stop merely at demonstrating the soteriological import of amalavijñāna or explaining how it relates to stages on the mārḡa. He ultimately seeks to show its pragmatic utility, by relating amalavijñāna to a specific meditative technique that will bring about its re-cognition. This is the practice of no-thought (*munyōm/wu-nien*), which is described as the "benefit" or "inspiration" (*i/li*—that is, the practical application or functioning—of original enlightenment *cum* amalavijñāna.

"How can one prompt those sentient beings not to give rise to a single thought?" "One should prompt those sentient beings to sit with their minds and spirits calm, abiding in the adamant stage. Once thoughts are tranquillized so that nothing is produced, the mind will be constantly calm and serene. This is what is meant by the absence of even a single thought." Muju Bodhisattva said, "This is inconceivable. When one is enlightened to the fact that thoughts are unproduced, one's mind becomes calm and serene. That is the inspiration of original enlightenment."⁷⁶

The step the author takes here begins to suggest that there are implications in the *Vajrasamādhi*'s treatment of amalavijñāna and tathāgatagarbha that go beyond the scholastic controversies summarized earlier concerning the nature of the mind. The notion that enlightenment is immanent in the mundane world—the quintessence of sinic Buddhist doctrine—ultimately fostered the evolution of new meditation techniques, such as no-thought, which have no direct analogues in Indian Buddhism.⁷⁷ The placement of this section on no-thought is also suggestive, in that it comes just before chapter 5 of the *Vajrasamādhi*, where most of the major Ch'an elements occur. Given the nascent Ch'an doctrines found in the *Vajrasamādhi*, which will be explored in the next chapter, there are indications here that the ontological and soteriological speculations current in seventh-century sinic Buddhism contributed to the development of types of meditation that would come to be identified with Ch'an. Chu-chen's commentary to this passage draws out its resonances with sayings attributed to the legendary Ch'an patriarchs Bodhidharma, Seng-ts'an (d. 606?), and Hui-neng.⁷⁸ We know that no-thought was one of the principal practices of the early and middle Ch'an schools, and

⁷⁶ VS, chap. 4, at n. 47.

⁷⁷ See my discussion of this process in "K'an-hua Meditation," pp. 324–28.

⁷⁸ Chu-chen, *T'ung-tsung chi* 6, p. 260c.

some have suggested it may even have antecedents in the Northern school of the early Ch'an period.⁷⁹ The testimony of the sūtra now indicates that no-thought practice can be traced into the incipency of Ch'an, at least a few decades before the emergence of the Northern school. The *Vajrasamādhi* therefore confirms the Tathāgatarbha orientation not only of much sinic Buddhist doctrine, but also of sinic Buddhist practice, and specifically its Ch'an forms.

The importance to Ch'an meditation of the concepts of tathāgatarbha, amalavijñāna, and inherent enlightenment are brought out with greatest clarity in Chu-chen's commentary. Chu-chen relates amalavijñāna to a concept that becomes of seminal importance in more mature phases of Ch'an: "counterillumination" (*panjol fan-chao* or *hoegwang panjol/hui-kuang fan-chao*), a notion the *Vajrasamādhi* alludes to elsewhere in chapter 4 as "reversion of the spirit" (*hoesin/hui-shen*).⁸⁰ In this new, uniquely Chinese description of the process by which meditative development occurs, the innate enlightenment of the mind is said to be naturally luminous, shining ever outward and allowing beings to become aware of their external world. This natural quality of luminosity is what is meant by "sentience," the one characteristic common to all "sentient" beings, and the very fact that beings are conscious is proof ipso facto that they are inherently enlightened. If the meditator can turn this radiance emanating from his mind back toward its source, he would rediscover that luminous core of the mind and become instantly enlightened. As Chu-chen explains: "One does not know that this [amalavijñāna] is a thing with which one is originally endowed; it is not something obtained from without. Sentient beings, who are composed of five skandhas [aggregates of existence], originally are endowed with the immaculate and pure nature. Now the one enlightenment transforms all the consciousnesses so that they access the pure nature. . . . The word 'access' means to 'look back on the fount' (*fan-yüan k'an*; Kor. *panwön kan*)."⁸¹ Chu-chen here is drawing on the Yogācāra concept of *āśrayaparāvṛtti*—the transformation of consciousness through the intercession of an external stimuli—but giving it an introspective twist. He instead sees the catalyst for this transformation of mind coming not from without but from within, deep inside the innermost recesses of each individual's enlightened identity. This is the "inspiration" of

⁷⁹ See McRae, p. 223

⁸⁰ *V/S*, chap. 4, before n. 41. For the role of *fan-chao* in Ch'an meditation, see my article "Chimul's Systematization of Chinese Meditative Techniques in Korean Sōn Buddhism," pp. 213–16.

⁸¹ Chu-chen, *T'ung-tsung chi* 6, p. 260a8–11

original enlightenment, which is working always on the individual, encouraging him toward his enlightenment.

Counterillumination and, in turn, the theoretical underpinnings of Ch'an meditation therefore seem to derive from this sinitic analysis of mind. In that all types of meditation foster an interiorization that will ultimately lead back to the source of mind itself, each in some sense involves counterillumination. The *Vajrasamādhi's* treatment here thus suggests that features characteristic of Ch'an thought and practice in its mature phases are present already in its incipency and owe their inspiration to the doctrinal matrix represented by sinitic Tathāgatagarbha thought.

The Meaning of "Vajrasamādhi": The Practical Implications of Innate Enlightenment

The fact that the sūtra is entitled after the vajrasamādhi (*kūṃgang sammae/chin-kang san-mei*), or "adamantine absorption," may derive as well from its emphasis on tathāgatagarbha and amalavijñāna. I noted in chapter 1 that the appearance of an otherwise unknown *Vajrasamādhi-sūtra* in the catalogues may have tempted the author to co-opt this title for his own composition, thus ensuring its instant legitimacy. But this "matter of convenience" may not have been the only reason. The notion of vajrasamādhi occupied a seminal place in the scriptural materials from which the author drew many of his ideas. The *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*, a proto-Tathāgatagarbha text, includes extensive references to vajrasamādhi, as will be seen in the following discussion. The *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra*, the scripture that makes arguably the earliest reference to a ninth consciousness, draws almost a tautology between vajrasamādhi, calmness and tranquillity of mind, the "other shore" of nirvāṇa, the *tathāgatakāya* (= dharmakāya), and the *nirmāṇakāyas* of the tathāgatas.⁸² The vajrasamādhi is therefore closely allied with the Tathāgatagarbha-amalavijñāna constellation of ideals that is so central to the sūtra.

The term vajrasamādhi is synonymous with, and often simply an alternate translation of, the *vajropamasamādhi* or "adamant-like samādhi," a term central to both Sarvāstivādin and Mahāyāna accounts of soteriology. To simplify a complicated series of steps that are not relevant to the discussion here, the Sarvāstivādins conceived of *vajropamasamādhi* as a meditative ab-

⁸² Bodhiruci's translation of *Ju Leng-ch'ieh ching* 2, T 671.16.522c; cf. Suzuki's translation from the Sanskrit, which is rather different, in *Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra*, p. 38.

sorption achieved toward the end of the path of cultivation, or *bhāvanāmārga*, which catalyzed the final experience of enlightenment, or bodhi. Overcoming all the emotional fetters was necessary in order for the adept to experience arhatship, the state of enlightenment that is catalyzed by radical non-attachment. This process of abandonment (*prahāṇa*) was initiated by this special kind of meditative absorption, which could destroy even the subtlest and most persistent of fetters, just as adamant or diamond could shatter even the hardest of minerals. With their destruction, the adept then knew that those fetters were gone forever (*kṣayajñāna*), an experience that was in some cases followed by knowledge of nonproduction (*anutpādayñāna*)—that the fetters would never arise again. *Vajropamasamādhi* was thus the factor that initiated final transcendence, or nirvāṇa.⁸³

The consummate ability of the vajrasamādhi in its Śrāvākayāna interpretation to defend against any and all obstacles to cultivation is illustrated in a tale about Śāriputra, one of the Buddha's two main disciples, which appears in the *Ekottarāgama*. While Śāriputra was cultivating the vajrasamādhi, it is said, he was attacked by a demon, who struck him viciously over the head. Completely unaware of what had happened to him, he eventually withdrew from his samādhi and came before the Buddha, who had learned of the assault. The Buddha asked him whether he was in pain, to which Śāriputra replied that he was fine, but that his head did indeed hurt a little. The Buddha then told him about the demon, who, the Buddha marveled, was so powerful that had he similarly struck Mt. Sumeru, the mountain would have crumbled. But the power of the vajrasamādhi had protected Śāriputra so that no injury could befall him. In the same way, other bhikṣus who gain the vajrasamādhi become impervious to flood, conflagration, or war.⁸⁴ This story apparently excited the imaginations of sixth-century Chinese, for it is excerpted in the earliest Chinese Buddhist collectanea, *Ching-lü i-hsiang* (Oddities from the sūtra and vinaya), compiled in 516.⁸⁵

A transitional role for *vajropamasamādhi* similar to that found in the Sarvāstivāda school is seen also in Mahāyāna interpretations of the term. The *bhāvanāmārga* in one Mahāyāna scheme continues through the ten stages (*bhūmi*) of the bodhisattva path, at the culmination of which the bodhisattva approaches buddhahood itself. This final stage of the path was termed the

⁸³ For discussion on the Sarvāstivādin treatment of *vajropamasamādhi*, see Herbert B. Guenther, *Philosophy and Psychology in the Abhidharma*, pp. 228–29, summarizing *Abhidharma-kośabhāṣya* vi.44–45.

⁸⁴ *Tseng-i a-han ching* 45, T 125 2.793a–c for the story.

⁸⁵ *Ching-lü i-hsiang*, T 2121.53.70c–71b.

niṣṭhāmārga, and was initiated by the *vajropamasamādhi*.⁸⁶ *Vajropamasamādhi* in this system thus leads to the same experience of *ḷaya* and *anutpāda* *jñānas* noted previously for the Sarvāstivāda program.⁸⁷ One of many alternate Mahāyāna schemata is found in Bodhiruci's translation of the *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra*, where the *vajrasamādhi* is achieved after the bodhisattva has entered the first of the ten *bhūmis*: "when a bodhisattva attains the first *bhūmi*, the Joyful, he realizes the clear gate of the hundreds of *vajrasamādhis*, . . . surpasses all the stages of the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas, and abides in the home of the tathāgatas, the realm of true thusness."⁸⁸ Hence, the *vajrasamādhi* transforms the adept from a follower of the two inferior vehicles of the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas to a kinsman of the buddhas themselves.

This sense that *vajrasamādhi* augurs the achievement of buddhahood, with all its unique qualities and superlative powers, is found frequently in sūtras of explicitly Mahāyāna pedigree. The *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra* treats the *vajrasamādhi* as the catalyst for the attainment of *sarvajñatā* (all-knowledge).⁸⁹ Elsewhere the *Prajñāpāramitā* literature notes that the intractability of the *vajrasamādhi* works like adamant to break the Buddha free from his physical bonds so that he can attain liberation and thereby aid all sentient beings.⁹⁰

This close association between *vajrasamādhi* and the achievement of buddhahood frequently implies that the *vajrasamādhi* is a special type of *samādhi* that is accessible only to, and specially reserved for, the buddhas.⁹¹ This

⁸⁶ Cf. *Ta-chih-tu lun* 23, T 1509.25.235a15–16: "Once he completes the ten *bhūmis*, he sits at the *bodhimāṇḍa* and gains the *vajrasamādhi*." A series of four sets of practices that lead to *vajrasamādhi* are given at *Ta-fang-teng ta-chi ching* (*Mahāsamnipāta-sūtra*) 12, T 397.13.83a2–16. The connection between *vajrasamādhi* and the *mārga* is also made prominently in the *P'u-sa ying-lo pen-yeh ching*, as the numerous citations in Wōnhyo's *KSGR* attest; see, for example, *KSGR* 3, 993c19–20, where Wōnhyo cites the text to illustrate the soteriological stage at which *vajrasamādhi* occurs; and *KSGR* 3, p. 994c, where *vajrasamādhi* is shown to be the culmination of thousands of *samādhis*, achieved by one who dwells on the equal-enlightenment stage.

⁸⁷ Following the account in *Abhidharmasamuccaya*, pp. 76ff; summarized in Guenther, *Abhidharma*, pp. 245–46.

⁸⁸ *Ju Leng-ch'ieh ching* (*Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra*) 7, T 671.16.557c10–12; cf. Suzuki, trans., *Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra*, p. 196.

⁸⁹ Cf. *Mo-ho po-jo po-lo-mi ching* 22, T 223.8.381a. See also "The Buddha said: one who has already gained the *vajrasamādhi* gains *sarvajña*." *Fang-kuang po-jo ching* (*Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra*) 2, T 221.8.9b22–23.

⁹⁰ "Ānanda. When the Tathāgata entered nirvāṇa, he entered [first] the *vajrasamādhi* and pulverized this physical body as if it were a mustard seed." *Lien-hua-mien ching* 1, T 386.12.1071a17–18. A similar quote appears in the *Fang-kuang po-jo ching* 7, T 221.8.53c25–27. See also *Ta-chih-tu lun* 15, T 1509.25.173c3, ch. 59, pp. 480a24–25, 481a21.

⁹¹ See *Kuang-po yen-ching pu-t'ui-chuan-lun ching* (*Avaiartikakakra-sūtra*) 1, T 268.9.257a3.

association seems to have been especially strong in Sinitic apocryphal scriptures. One example is the *Wu-shang-i ching* (Book of the supreme basis), an important Tathāgatagarbha text that may have been written by someone from Paramārtha's coterie of disciples, perhaps even Paramārtha himself, to justify his amalgamation of the Tathāgatagarbha and Yogācāra systems. It says that "the tathāgatas alone attain vajrasamādhi."⁹² The *Jen-wang ching* (Book of benevolent kings), an apocryphal scripture with Prajñāpāramitā affinities, also states that "the buddhas and the tenth-*bhūmi* bodhisattvas both employ the acquiescence to calm extinction (*chi-mieh jen*) in order to access the vajrasamādhi."⁹³ The prologue to the *Vajrasamādhi* opens with the Buddha entering into that eponymous absorption, a scene found also in other scriptures.⁹⁴ The *Vajrasamādhi*'s description there of the vajrasamādhi as being a state wherein both body and mind are motionless is also corroborated in other sūtras, where the vajrasamādhi is described as the perfect stillness achieved through realizing the truth of voidness.⁹⁵ Our sūtra's description of vajrasamādhi as "unmoving" (*pu-dong/pu-tung*; Skt. *acala*) is noteworthy, since immobility was also considered to be one of the characteristics of the amalavijñāna.⁹⁶ This reference is one of the first explicit suggestions of the affinities between the two ideas. Throughout much of Mahāyāna literature, then, vajrasamādhi was considered to be the consummation of the cultivation of samādhi;⁹⁷ but it was a kind of samādhi that had soteriological

⁹² *Wu-shang-i ching*, T 669.16.475c10. On the Chinese origins of this text, see Takasaki, *Rainagotravibhāga*, p. 52. The vajrasamādhi is mentioned in association with *sarvajñatā* and buddhahood in the apocryphal *P'u-sa ying-lo pen-yeh ching* 9, T 656.16.80b15.

⁹³ *Jen-wang po-jo po-lo-mi ching* 1, T 245.8.826c21–22; discussed in Chih-i's commentary, *Jen-wang hu-kuo po-jo ching shu* 4, T 1705.33.271a; and in Chi-tsang's commentary, *Jen-wang po-jo ching shu* 3, T 1707.33.330b–c

⁹⁴ See, for example, *P'u-sa ts'ung Tou-shu-t'ien Chiang shen-mu-t'ai shuo kuang-p'u ching* 1, T 384.12.1015c5–6.

⁹⁵ "Mañjuśrī. In your chamber, sit straight with your body held erect and, with mind motionless, recollect the realms of the buddhas. Realizing for yourself the dharma of voidness, you gain the vajrasamādhi." *Pu-t'ui-chuan fa-lun ching* 1, T 267.9.228c5–7. A similar sense of vajrasamādhi as being a state in which all dharmas are in perfect equanimity is also found in the *Shih-hsiang po-jo po-lo-mi ching*, T 240.8.776b9–10; and *Kuang-tsan ching* 6, T 222.8.190c25–26: "When one abides in this absorption, all is equal, and nothing can harm one." See also Hui-yüan, *Ta-sheng i chang* 16, T 1851.44.786b29–c1, who treats vajrasamādhi as equanimity of mind

⁹⁶ See Chih-i's *Chin-kuang-ming ching hsuan-i* 1, T 1783.39.4a12–13. This passage is cited also in the Sung dynasty Buddhist lexicon, *Fan-i ming-i chi* 6, T 2131.54.1158c18.

⁹⁷ As the *Pañcaviṃśatī* says, "There is no other samādhi that can possibly match abiding in this samādhi." *Fang-kuang po-jo ching* 4, T 221.8.23b28–29. Note also: "They praise the vajrasamādhi as surpassing all samādhis." *Pu-t'ui-chuan fa-lun ching* 2, T 267.9.234b2–3. "Wōnhyo's

implications that far surpassed all other aspects of the dharma, including the concept of voidness, the trainings in *śīla*, *saṃādhi*, and *prajñā*, and even liberation itself.⁹⁸ One scholar-monk even went so far as to say that *vajrasamādhi* is enlightenment.⁹⁹

The *vajrasamādhi* is sometimes treated in conjunction with a sudden approach to enlightenment, which ultimately comes to occupy such an important spot in the East Asian Buddhist tradition. In the *Prajñāpāramitā* and *Mahāratnakūṭa* sūtras, the *vajrasamādhi* is listed as one of the *saṃādhis* that can quickly lead to the attainment of the complete, perfect enlightenment of buddhahood (*anuttarasamyaksambodhi*),¹⁰⁰ while elsewhere it is said to prompt the adept to “leap to the eighth *bhūmi*,” the stage of buddhahood according to an early *mārga* scheme.¹⁰¹ The affinity of the *vajrasamādhi* with subitist soteriologies has antecedents in early Indian thought, since even the *Abhidharmamahāvibhāṣā* notes that some *Ābhidharmikas* had proposed that the *vajropamasamādhi* brings about the instantaneous eradication of all the defilements and thence sudden enlightenment.¹⁰² A similar function of *vajrasamādhi* is mentioned in the *Ta-sheng ju-tao tz’u-ti* (Mahāyāna program for accessing the path) by the Fa-hsiang scholar Chih-chou (679–723), written

hagiographer, Iryōn, also brings out this sense of *vajrasamādhi* as being the preeminent form of *saṃādhi* when he calls it “the hub of *saṃādhi*” (SGYS, p. 1006b2).

⁹⁸ *Kuang-tsan ching* 5, T 222.8.181b3–8.

⁹⁹ Pu-k’ung (Amoghavajra; 704–774), *Chin-kang-ting ching ta yu-ch’ieh pi-mi hsin-ti fa-men i-chieh* 1, T 1798.39.809a14.

¹⁰⁰ “A *bodhisattva-mahāsattva* who cultivates these *saṃādhis* will quickly attain *anuttarasamyaksambodhi*.” *Mo-ho po-jo po-lo-mi ching* (*Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra*) 3, T 223.8.237c. “This *bodhisattva-mahāsattva* . . . perfects the abiding in the *vajropamasamādhi*, and uses the wisdom that comes into accordance in one thought-moment (*i-nien hsiang-ying hui*) to attain *anuttarasamyaksambodhi*”; *Mo-ho po-jo po-lo-mi ching* 3, T 223.8.408b18–19; *Ta-chih-tu lun* 92, T 1509.25.708b15; *ch.* 86, p. 662b3; *Ta-pao-chi ching* (*Mahāratnakūṭa*) 111, T 310.11.628c21–22. See also *Fang-kuang po-jo ching* 2, T 221 8.16b. The *vajrasamādhi* is also described as catalyzing the transition from *bodhisattvahood* to buddhahood in *Shan-hai-hui p’u-sa ching* (T 2891.85.1406b19–25), a Chinese apocryphon written no later than 695.

¹⁰¹ *P’u-sa ying-lo pen-yeh ching* 8, T 656.16.79c18

¹⁰² “Some have this grasping: When the *vajropamasamādhi* appears, it suddenly eradicates all the defilements of the three realms of existence that may be cut off by insight and cultivation. All the stages before those can only subdue them, and cannot yet cut of all the outflows. Like the *śramaṇas* [who advocate] such sudden eradication, these [people] advocate sudden enlightenment (*tun-chüeh*) and attainment of the *asaikṣaphala*. This is like waking from a dream: one suddenly abandons one’s torpor and lassitude.” *A-pi-ta-mo ta-pi-p’o-sha lun* (*Abhidharmamahāvibhāṣā*) 90; T 1545.27.465c. Whalen Lai has also argued that the Sarvāstivāda manual *Abhidharmahṛdaya* exerted critical influence in the evolution of Tao-sheng’s (ca. 360–434) theory of sudden enlightenment; see Lai, “Tao-sheng’s Theory of Sudden Enlightenment Re-examined,” pp. 174–77.

in the same period during which the *Vajrasamādhi* was composed. He notes, “Once one has completed the ten *bhūmis* and the *vajropamasamādhi* appears, in an instant (*kṣaṇa*) all the defilements that have arisen in the three realms of existence are simultaneously eradicated and one gains right enlightenment.”¹⁰³ Given the Ch’an affinities in our sūtra, the use of vajrasamādhi in its title may thus be one of the first, albeit tentative, adumbrations of the Ch’an concern with subitism that would be proclaimed so strongly a few decades later in the *Platform Sūtra*.

The closest links between vajrasamādhi and Tathāgatagarbha doctrine are drawn in the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*.¹⁰⁴ The *Nirvāṇa Sūtra* is best known for teaching the inherence of the buddha-nature in all sentient beings, a precursor of the Tathāgatagarbha doctrine. But it also includes one of the most extensive exegeses of the vajrasamādhi in Mahāyāna literature and closely associates this absorption with seeing the buddha-nature and achieving *anuttarasamyaksambodhi*.¹⁰⁵ “Peaceful abiding” (*an-chu*) in vajrasamādhi brings a number of special talents that are exclusive to the bodhisattva. These include the ability “to eradicate all the defilements of all sentient beings in a single instant of thought and transmogrify his body like a buddha so that its numbers are immeasurable, pervading all the buddha lands of the ten directions, which are like the sands of the Ganges.”¹⁰⁶ Perhaps the most important effect of abiding in the vajrasamādhi, however, is that it produces an expansive vision of all dharmas in which the bodhisattva

sees in the distance all the dharmas, none of which are unclear, just as a person who ascends a tall mountain sees in the distance all directions, all of which are clear.¹⁰⁷ . . . He sees that all dharmas are without obstructions, as if he were seeing an *āmalaka* [myrobalan] fruit in the palm of his hand. . . . Abid-

¹⁰³ *Ta-sheng ju-tao tz’u-ti*, T 1864 45.464b7–9

¹⁰⁴ Unless otherwise indicated, all the passages from the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* cited in the following paragraphs are from *Ta pan-nieh-p’an ching* 24, T 374.12.509b–510b.

¹⁰⁵ *Ta pan-nieh-p’an ching* 2, T 374.12.372b1–2, and see *Ta pan-nieh-p’an ching* 1, T 375.12.611c24–26

¹⁰⁶ The *Ta-chih-tu lun* also notes that “abiding in the vajrasamādhi destroys all defilements” (*chuan* 62, T 1509.25.497c9), brings “liberation of the mind” (*ch.* 84, p. 649b9) and the “unimpeded liberation of all the buddhas” (*ch.* 40, 350b20).

¹⁰⁷ This metaphor from the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra* is adapted by the apocryphal *Jen-wang ching* 2, T 246.8.842c2–3, suggesting the strong influence of the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra* over many indigenous sinic compositions; the metaphor is discussed in Yen-shou’s (904–975) *Tsung-ching lu* 30, T 2016.48.594b. This metaphor is often used in East Asian Buddhism as an analogy for the soteriological program of gradual cultivation/gradual awakening; see Buswell, *Korean Approach*, pp. 287–88, translating Ch’eng-kuan and Chinul.

ing in [the vajrasamādhi], he is able to dominate [lit., to destroy and scatter] all those dharmas. . . . Wherever adamant strikes, there is nothing that is not shattered, and yet that adamant is not marred. So too is it with vajrasamādhi: there are none of those dharmas that it strikes which is not shattered, and yet that samādhi is in no way marred.¹⁰⁸

This perfect control over the dharmas is possible only because the meditator absorbed in the vajrasamādhi does not become attached to their external characteristics. Rather, he notes their essence—their voidness—and thus keeps his mind in a state that is completely beyond discrimination:

Although he sees sentient beings, from the beginning his mind knows no sign of “sentient being.” . . . Although he perceives day and night, he knows no sign of day and night. Although he sees everything, he knows no sign of “everything.” Although he sees all defilements and bonds, he also knows no sign of defilement. Although he perceives the holy eightfold path, he knows no such sign. Although he sees bodhi, he knows no such sign. Although he perceives nirvāṇa, he knows no such sign. Why is this? Oh son of good family. It is because all dharmas are originally signless. Because of the power of this samādhi, the bodhisattva sees that all dharmas are originally signless.

The apocryphal *Fan-wang ching* (Book of Brahmā’s net) also makes a similar claim, when it declares that “once all signs are extinguished one gains the approach of the vajrasamādhi. One accesses both the gate of all-embracing practices and the stage that is void and equanimous.”¹⁰⁹ This same sense of utter nonattachment toward all dharmas is to be applied even to the practices of the bodhisattva, for “the vajrasamādhi allows the bodhisattva to destroy all the defilements after cultivating, but without ever thinking that there is a self who can sunder those bonds. . . . Although the vajrasamādhi can destroy all the defilements, from the first he does not think, ‘I will destroy them.’ ” Like so much of Mahāyāna literature, then, the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra* treats the vajrasamādhi as the apex of samādhi, a claim the text backs up, as it does with so many of its teachings, with numerous similes.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁸ Similar passages concerning the control the vajrasamādhi brings to all dharmas can be found also in *Pei-hua ching* (*Karunāpundarika*) 8, T 157.8.221b13–14. “There is the vajrasamādhi. One who enters this samādhi, completely penetrates all dharmas . . . and does not see even the subtlest of obstacles.”

¹⁰⁹ *Fan-wang ching* 1, T 1848.24.1000b6–7.

¹¹⁰ “Oh son of good family. Just as among all gems diamond is preeminent, so too is it for the bodhisattva who attains vajrasamādhi: among all samādhis it is supreme. Why is this? A

The meaning and significance of the vajrasamādhi were of considerable concern in East Asian exegetical writings. The most extensive analysis of the vajrasamādhi by a Chinese scholiast was made by Ching-ying Hui-yüan in his magnum opus, *Ta-sheng i chang* (Encyclopedia of Mahāyāna). His treatment there is valuable for gleaning the nuances the term carried among Sui and T'ang exegetes sympathetic to Tathāgatagarbha thought. Hui-yüan assumed that vajrasamādhi derived from the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra*.¹¹¹ He analyzes the vajra in vajrasamādhi as meaning "true realization" and says that it has as its essential nature "true consciousness," which he defines as

the eighth consciousness (*hsin*), the tathāgatagarbha. . . . The original nature of this mind of the true consciousness is pure, but because it conceals the meaning of voidness, it consequently becomes maculated and tainted. If one cleans away these false taints, the mind, purified, will shine radiantly. This radiantly bright, pure wisdom will realize the original thusness of dharmas, and not perceive even a single dharma that can produce false conceptions. Because no falsity arises, it is able to remove benighted delusion, and will not be affected by deluded obstacles. Hence, it is called vajra.¹¹²

Among the several possible analyses of its characteristics, Hui-yüan notes that vajrasamādhi leads to four kinds of knowledge, including knowledge of the absolute tathāgatagarbha.¹¹³ One of the more interesting features of Hui-yüan's treatment is his statement that a bodhisattva's initial entry into the tenth *bhūmi* brings the attainment of immaculate samādhi (*li-kou san-mei*),

bodhisattva-*mahāsattva* who cultivates this samādhi wields power over each and every samādhi. My good man. It is just as all petty kings pledge allegiance to a cakravartin [wheel-turning emperor]. So too is it with all samādhis: they all pay allegiance to the vajrasamādhi. . . . It is that which all samādhis honor and respect. . . . Oh son of good family. It is like this: One should know that a man on the banks of a great sea has already availed himself of the water of the rivers, springs, and ponds. So too is it with a bodhisattva-*mahāsattva*. If he cultivates in this wise the vajrasamādhi, one should know that he has already cultivated all the samādhis" *Ta-pan-nuen-p'an ching* 24, T 374 12.5096. See also the *Karuṇāpūṇḍarīka-sūtra*, where it is said that the vajrasamādhi is the supreme samādhi that can destroy all others; *Pei-hua ching* 8, T 157.3.220c8-9; *Ta-sheng pei fen-t'o-l ching* 7, T 158.3.278b1.

¹¹¹ *Ta-sheng i chang* 9, T 1851 44.637c16; Hui-yüan's exegesis of the term vajrasamādhi appears on pp. 637c-41a.

¹¹² *Ta-sheng i chang* 9, T 1851 44.638b.

¹¹³ "One, knowledge of worldly truths, which is awareness of worldly events and characteristics. Two, knowledge of absolute truth, which is awareness of the voidness of all dharmas. Three, knowledge of the one reality, which is knowledge that nothing either exists or does not exist. Four, knowledge of the *dharmadhātu*, that is, awareness of the distinctions in the *dharmadhātu* aspect of the true and real tathāgatagarbha." *Ta-sheng i chang* 9, T 1851 44.639b25-28; for this whole section see pp. 638b-39b.

which, like vajrasamādhi, can destroy all obstacles to enlightenment.¹¹⁴ The association he draws between vajrasamādhi and an “immaculate samādhi” would have immediately suggested to a Chinese reader the amalavijñāna. A similar affinity is also seen in the connection drawn between the vajrasamādhi and the Immaculate Stage (*wu-kou ti*) in the apocryphal *P’u-sa ying-lo pen-yeh ching*.¹¹⁵ Hence, it is clear that, by the late sixth century, East Asian scholars were treating the vajrasamādhi as the meditative analogue of the more scholastic terms tathāgatagarbha and amalavijñāna, if not the type of samādhi that was specifically intended to induce realization of the tathāgatagarbha.¹¹⁶

The associations of the vajrasamādhi with this same tathāgatagarbha/amalavijñāna cross-section of ideas is brought out in analyses of the term in the writings of other learned scholars of the period, especially authors associated with the T’ien-t’ai, San-lun, and early Ch’an schools. Many of the same themes found in the sūtra literature are reiterated by such renowned thinkers as Chih-i, the T’ien-t’ai exegete, and Chi-tsang, the systematizer of the San-lun or Madhyamaka school. Chih-i, for example, remarks that “one who wishes to realize supreme, sublime enlightenment must first access the vajrasamādhi; then all the buddhadharmas will appear before him.”¹¹⁷ Chi-tsang notes that “only the tathāgatas access the vajrasamādhi, for the power of that transcendent path can destroy this physical body,”¹¹⁸ suggesting, as had many sūtras, that vajrasamādhi was the exclusive provenance of the buddhas. Wōnhyo considers the essence (*ch’e/t’i*) of vajrasamādhi to be the edge of reality (*bhūtakoti*), or enlightenment itself, and its function (*yong/yung*) to be the destruction of any and all obstacles to that enlightenment. Wōnhyo states that the vajrasamādhi “realizes the principle and probes the fountain-

¹¹⁴ *Ta-sheng i chang* 9, T 1851.44.639c. This function of vajrasamādhi is brought out by Tzu-hsüan (d.1038), a Sung dynasty Hua-yen exegete: “Once the *vajropamasamādhi* appears, it destroys the obstacles to the *buddha-bhūmi* and one thence accesses sublime enlightenment.” *Shou-leng-yen i-shu chu-ching* 8–2, T 1799.39.932b8–9.

¹¹⁵ *P’u-sa ying-lo pen-yeh ching* 2, T 1485.24.1018b9–10.

¹¹⁶ Although deriving from a later period, Tzu-hsüan also mentions the role of the vajrasamādhi in realizing the tathāgatagarbha: “Through the power that comes from [seeing all dharmas] as illusory, he infuses his cultivation with the wisdoms of learning, reflection, and cultivation and achieves the vajrasamādhi. He is then able to destroy the beginningless subtle ignorance, and completely realize the essence of the tathāgatagarbha.” *Shou-leng-yen i-shu chu-ching* 6–2, T 1799.39.903c23–25.

¹¹⁷ *Shih ch’an po-lo-mi tz’u-ti fa-men* 1a, T 1916.46.476c23–24. Cf. the statement in the *Wei-mo ching shu* (ch. 6, T 2772.85.420b14–15): “By the time one reaches the final mind of the ten *bhūmis*, the vajrasamādhi intimately produces the meritorious qualities of buddhahood.”

¹¹⁸ *Fa-hua hsüan-lun* 9, T 1720.34.434c5–6.

head [of the mind],” language that immediately recalls the *Vajrasamādhi*’s description of the tathāgatagarbha. Wōnhyo also attempts to show that vajrasamādhi allows other soteriological stratagems to function optimally, free from any impediments to their operation, by revealing that all samādhis are devoid of own-nature (*niḥsvabhāva*).¹¹⁹ Hence, the preponderance of evidence suggests that, within the sinitic tradition, the vajrasamādhi was regarded as one of the principal soteriological weapons in the Buddhist spiritual arsenal, which was closely tied to the revelation of the realm of buddhahood.

Given the broad attention the concept of vajrasamādhi received in scholastic writings of the sixth and seventh centuries, it is no surprise that it is also treated extensively in literature from the beginnings of Ch’an. There seems to have been two reasons for this attention. First, vajrasamādhi was often regarded within the Chinese tradition to be the quintessence of samādhi, if not even the consummation of dhyānapāramitā itself, as the preceptive *Yu-p’o-sai chieh ching* (**Upāsakaśīla-sūtra*) had said;¹²⁰ for a school like Ch’an that claimed to be the principal bastion of meditative expertise, it is to be expected that it would have been attracted to this type of samādhi and would have sought to make it its own. Second, vajrasamādhi had important resonances with the notion of intrinsic enlightenment, which was so central to the maturing sinitic doctrinal approach, including Ch’an. Ch’an praxis was founded upon the notion of “seeing the nature” (*kyōnsōng/chien-hsing*), the nature being for our purposes equivalent to tathāgatagarbha or amalavijñāna, and the vajrasamādhi thus could have been interpreted as the type of samādhi that produced this vision.

This burgeoning Ch’an interest in vajrasamādhi is attested by the term’s appearance in writings attributed to Tao-hsin and Hung-jen, the Ch’an adepts most closely associated with the thought of the *Vajrasamādhi*, as will be seen in the next chapter. The section on Tao-hsin in *Leng-ch’ieh shih-tzu chi* (Record of masters and disciples of the *Lañkāvatāra*) has a lengthy passage in which the vajrasamādhi is mentioned prominently in connection with the idea of seeing (*k’an*; Kor. *kan*) the buddha-nature:

One then sees that this sort of mind is identical to the Tathāgata’s body of the true dharma-nature. It is also called the right dharma, buddha-nature, the real-nature and the edge of reality of all dharmas, the pure land, bodhi, vajra-

¹¹⁹ KSGR 1, p. 961c.

¹²⁰ See the statement in *Yu-p’o-sai chieh ching* (**Upāsakaśīla-sūtra*) 4, T 1488.24.1054a5–6.

samādhi, original enlightenment, and so on. It is also called the realm of nirvāṇa, prajñā, and so on. While its names may be infinite, they all have the same exact essence.¹²¹

The vajrasamādhi as the culmination of the process of practice is also referred to in the *Hsiu-hsin yao-lun* (alt. *Ch'oesangsŭng-ron*), attributed to Tao-hsin's successor, Hung-jen. There vajrasamādhi is said to be engendered by eradicating the delusion of personal possession,¹²² which would initiate the experience of nonattachment that is nirvāṇa, as seen previously in the sūtra literature.

The vajrasamādhi is often associated with another type of samādhi, which also comes to occupy an important place in the indigenous exegetical and practice tradition, and particularly in Ch'an. This is the *śūraṃgamasamādhi*, or "heroic-march absorption." As the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra* notes in a famous passage that is frequently quoted in the commentarial literature:

Furthermore, my good man, the buddha-nature is precisely the *śūraṃgamasamādhi*. That nature is like clarified ghee, and it is precisely the mother of all the buddhas. It is through the power of the *śūraṃgamasamādhi* that you are prompted to have the permanence, bliss, selfhood, and purity of all the buddhas. All sentient beings possess this *śūraṃgamasamādhi*; but because they don't cultivate, they can't see it. Therefore they are unable to attain *anuttarasamyaksambodhi*.

My good man. The *śūraṃgamasamādhi* has five names. The first is *śūraṃgamasamādhi*. The second is prajñāpāramitā. The third is vajrasamādhi. The fourth is the lion's roar samādhi. The fifth is buddha-nature. Each of these names comes from its particular function.¹²³

This connection between the vajra and *śūraṃgama* samādhis¹²⁴ is particularly compelling when one considers that the *Vajrasamādhi* and *Shou-leng-yen ching* (**Śūraṃgamasamādhi-sūtra*), which like the *Vajrasamādhi* takes its name from an important samādhi, are two of the sinic apocryphal scriptures most influential in the Ch'an school. The *Shou-leng-yen ching* is alleged to have been

¹²¹ *Leng-ch'ieh shih-tzu chi*, T 2837.85.1287a17–20.

¹²² *Ch'oesangsŭng-ron*, T 2011.48.378c25–26; cf. the translation in McRae, p. 130, made from his new edition in his appendix, p. 12.

¹²³ *Ta pan-nieh-p'an ching* 27, T 374.12.524c18–25; cf. 26, 534a20–21, where the vajra and *śūraṃgama* samādhis are associated. This passage has received much attention in Chinese exegetical writing: see, for example, Chih-i's *Wei-mo-ching lüeh-shu* 9, T 1778.38.684a5ff; and I-hsing's *Ta-p'i-lou-che-na ch'eng-fō ching shu* 6, T 1796.39.645c12ff.

¹²⁴ See also the discussion in Chi-tsang's *Jen-wang po-jo ching shu* 1, T 1707.33.319a.

translated in A.D. 705 by the otherwise-unknown Pāramiti (alt. Pramiti), but it is generally presumed to be an indigenous Chinese composition, displaying considerable influence from the *Awakening of Faith*.¹²⁵ Still another related text is the *Yüan-chüeh ching*, or *Book of Consummate Enlightenment*. The translation of this sūtra is said to have been done by Buddhatrāta in 793, but it is now known to have been composed in China in the last decade of the seventh century, only a few years after the writing of the *Vajrasamādhi*.¹²⁶ The Ch'an affinities with each of these scriptures are well documented, and they are all cited extensively in Ch'an exegetical works written in support of the school's distinctive positions. All three derive from a similar philosophical milieu, founded on Tathāgatagarbha thought and based principally on the *Awakening of Faith*.

The theme constantly reiterated in both translated and apocryphal sūtras as well as indigenous commentarial literature was that vajrasamādhi was the culmination of the development in samādhi, if not of all of Buddhist spiritual culture. The conceptual jump the *Vajrasamādhi* seeks to make is to claim that vajrasamādhi does not merely consummate Buddhist praxis, but in fact *subsumes* it. This inference is made by Wōnhyo, who notes that vajrasamādhi "brings into operation the functioning of all other samādhis, in the same way that polishing a precious gem can make it functional [as jewelry, etc.]."¹²⁷ The vajrasamādhi thus becomes another example of the fundamental synthetic interests of the sūtra. And it draws on a wide-ranging debate concerning soteriological processes and their ontological underpinnings then taking place in sinitic Buddhism.

The *Vajrasamādhi*'s Message to Silla Buddhists

Previous sections have mapped out the contours of the philosophical terrain covered in the *Vajrasamādhi*. It has been seen that Tathāgatagarbha/amalavijñāna thought, with a strong praxis orientation, is the most prominent feature of the sūtra. Given these various doctrinal elements, what message did the *Vajrasamādhi* convey to the Silla Buddhists who would have first had

¹²⁵ See Mochizuki, *Bukkyō kyōten*, pp. 493–509. Ronald Epstein has tried to prove the Indian provenance of the text in his dissertation, "The *Sūtraigama-sūtra* with Tripiṭaka Master Hsüan-hua's Commentary *An Elementary Explanation of Its General Meaning: A Preliminary Study and Partial Translation*." I find his argument unconvincing.

¹²⁶ See Mochizuki, *Bukkyō kyōten*, pp. 509–19.

¹²⁷ KSGR 1, p. 961c8.

contact with the scripture? Wŏnhyo's exegesis of the scripture in his commentary *Kŭmgang sammaegyŏng-ron* (KSGR) is a good place to search for answers. Among the traditional commentators, Wŏnhyo made arguably the most exhaustive and insightful study of the text. He seems also to have been most enthralled personally by the *Vajrasamādhī*—so much so that he would come out of retirement to write one final work. In Wŏnhyo's treatment, two concerns are foremost, which one would do well to keep in mind in assessing the possible reasons for the composition of the text in Korea: first, its utility in resolving the internal divisions renting what was perceived to be the pristine harmony of the Buddhadharma; and second, the close connection Wŏnhyo saw between its synthetic outlook and actual religious praxis.

As Korean scholars are wont to point out, Silla Buddhism was a syncretic, or, perhaps better, an "ecumenical" tradition (what the Koreans call *t'ong pulgyo*, or "comprehensive Buddhism"). While this view is repeated so perfunctorily in Korean scholarship as to suggest stereotypy, a glance at the writings produced by Silla Buddhist exegetes does, to a large extent, bear it out. Extant works written during the early decades of the Unified Silla dynasty, as well as catalogue listings of nonextant works, show that Wŏnhyo and his contemporaries were actively exploring the whole gamut of Buddhist philosophical materials, from Madhyamaka to Yogācāra to Pure Land, and attempting to integrate the viewpoints of these different teachings into an all-inclusive perspective on Buddhist thought and practice. Wŏnhyo states, for example, in the preface to his *Simmun hwajaeng-ron* that his intent is to harmonize all the variant descriptions in Buddhist texts concerning the original "consummate sound" (*wŏnsŏng/yüan-sheng*) of the Buddha's teaching—variations causing controversies that threatened to obscure the fundamental consistency of the religion's message.¹²⁸ A similar ecumenical refrain pervades most of Wŏnhyo's works, especially his commentaries to *Awakening of Faith* and the *Vajrasamādhī*. This refrain so inspired the Silla intellectual community that "syncretism" became the watchword of Korean Buddhism from Wŏnhyo's time onward.

Pak Chonghong first suggested that one of the specific goals of Wŏnhyo's syncretic philosophy was to resolve what he perceived as a bifurcation in Mahāyāna Buddhist philosophy: the *śūnyavāda* of the Madhyamaka and the

¹²⁸ *Simmun hwajaeng-ron*, in Cho Myŏnggi, ed., *Wŏnhyo chŏnjip*, p. 640; this is quoted also in *Kosŏn-sa Sŏdang hwasang t'appi*, in *Wŏnhyo chŏnjip*, p. 661, translated in part in Park, "Wŏnhyo's Commentaries," p. 74.

viññaptimātra (“mere-representation”) of the Yogācāra.¹²⁹ Wŏnhyo’s major effort toward this resolution was made in one of his most influential works, *Taesŭng kisillon-so* (Commentary to the *Awakening of Faith*).¹³⁰ There, Wŏnhyo draws on the innovative explication of Tathāgatagarbha doctrine in that treatise to outline a possible reconciliation.¹³¹ He presumes the one mind (the tathāgatagarbha) to be the ontological ground of two fundamental qualities: first, true thusness (representing Madhyamaka), and second, production-and-extinction (representing Yogācāra). These same two aspects are then said to be fundamental to the tripartite scriptural taxonomy Wŏnhyo provides in his *Kisillon-so*, which clarifies the preeminent place Tathāgatagarbha scriptures hold in his interpretation of Buddhism. The first level, represented by the Perfection of Wisdom (Prajñāpāramitā) scriptures, explains the absolute aspect of existence, or true thusness, that is, that which is indefeasible and immutable. The second level, as found in such texts as the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra* and the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra*, details the conventional nature of the world—the principle of production-and-extinction—which is governed by causal processes. These two levels, which are all but diametrically opposed, are amalgamated in the third level of the teachings: the approach that is adaptable (*suyŏn/sui-yŭan*; lit., “in accord with conditions”) and yet motionless,¹³² where both true thusness and production-and-extinction are inter-fused. This level is represented by the synthetic teaching found in such texts as the *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra* and the *Awakening of Faith*, where the tathāgatagarbha concept is used to synthesize variant Buddhist doctrines into comprehensive systems of thought. Although Wŏnhyo does not mention the *Vajrasamādhi* in connection with this taxonomy, it is clear that he would have placed the sūtra in the third and highest level of his classification.¹³³ As an

¹²⁹ Pak Chonghong, *Han’guk sasang sa: Pulgyo sasang p’yŏn*, pp. 85–106; Yi Chongik, “Wŏnhyo ūi saengae wa sasang,” pp. 221–26; Sung Bae Park, “Wŏnhyo’s Commentaries,” pp. 50–53. For the syncretic focus of Wŏnhyo’s thought, see Kim Unhak, “Wŏnhyo ūi hwajaeng sasang,” pp. 173–82; Yi Chongik, *Wŏnhyo ūi kūnbon sasang*; and for accessible general surveys, see Rhi Ki-yong, “Wŏnhyo and His Thought,” pp. 4–9, and Hong Jung-Shik [Hong Chŏngsik], “The Thought and Life of Wŏnhyo,” pp. 15–30.

¹³⁰ *T* 1844/1845.44.202a–39c. There are a number of Korean vernacular translations, of which Rhi Ki-yong’s is the best; see Rhi Ki-yong, *Han’guk ūi Pulgyo sasang*, pp. 29–137, and his study of the text, *Wŏnhyo sasang*. Sung Bae Park has translated a portion of the text in his “Wŏnhyo’s Commentaries,” pp. 120–85.

¹³¹ See Takamne Ryōshū, *Kegon shisōshi*, pp. 190–93, discussing both the *Kisillon-so* and *KSGR*.

¹³² *Taesŭng kisillon pyŏlgi*, *T* 1845.44.227c23–228a2; noted in Park, “Wŏnhyo’s Commentaries,” pp. 182 and 248 n. 203.

¹³³ Despite these close links between the *Vajrasamādhi* and *Awakening of Faith*, Wŏnhyo

aside here, it may be noted that in *Kisillon-so* Wŏnhyo intimates that the *Lankāvatāra* is the sūtra source for the ideas presented in the *Awakening of Faith*; in *KSGR*, however, he sees the *Vajrasamādhi* instead as that source.

One of the best summaries of Wŏnhyo's syncretic concern appears in his *Yŏlban-kyŏng chongyo* (Thematic essentials of the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra*):

The myriads of meritorious qualities of the stage of buddhahood have, in brief, two aspects. If you first abandon the characteristics [of true thusness and production-and-extinction], and return to the aspect of the one mind [the tathāgatagarbha, then] all meritorious characteristics will be the same as the *dharmadhātu*. . . . If you rely on the aspect in which these myriads of meritorious qualities are perfected through [the fact that they arise from] the nature, there will be none of the meritorious qualities of either body or mind with which you will not be fully endowed. . . . Although there are these two aspects, they are free from any sign of differentiation. For this reason, all theories are free from any limitations [i.e., any theory is valid].¹³⁴

For Wŏnhyo, then, both the Madhyamaka apophasis as well as the Yogācāra kataphasis were equally valid descriptions of reality, accurately describing one aspect of the process of causation.¹³⁵ But it was only the Tathāgatagarbha doctrine that could effect a truly syncretic vision in which both of these descriptive approaches could function symbiotically for the benefit of the Buddhist practitioner.

As has been seen, one of the principal treatises that provided scriptural justification for such a syncretic attitude was the *Awakening of Faith*, perhaps the most important text in the development of Korean Buddhism in general and Unified Silla Buddhism in particular. Wŏnhyo's exegesis of the *Vajrasamādhi* suggests a possible motive behind the composition of the scripture in Korea: to appeal to intrinsic Silla interest in a sūtra that would legitimate the views presented in that treatise. Many Silla and T'ang commentators, including Wŏnhyo, considered the *Awakening of Faith* to be an ideal vehicle for amalgamating the various tendencies within Mahāyāna philosophy.¹³⁶

does not include the *Vajrasamādhi* in this taxonomy. This omission lends further support to my argument in chapter 2 that Wŏnhyo was unfamiliar with the *Vajrasamādhi* at the time he wrote his *Kisillon-so*.

¹³⁴ *Yŏlban-kyŏng chongyo*, T 1769.38.245b15–19; noted also by Ko Ikchin, p. 226.

¹³⁵ For this use of apophasis and kataphasis in a Chinese Buddhist rhetorical context, see Robert Gimello, "Apophasic and Kataphatic Discourse in Mahāyāna," pp. 117–36.

¹³⁶ The syncretic nature of *Ta-sheng ch'i-hsin lun* has been discussed by Takamine Ryōshū, *Kegon shisōshi*, pp. 140–45; Rhi Ki-yong (Yi Kiyŏng), *Wŏnhyo sasang: segye kwan*, pp. 23–27; and cf. Kashiwagi Hiroo, *Daijō kishinron no kenkyū*, pp. 427–66.

But the *Awakening of Faith* was just a śāstra and, consequently, a nonultimate description of reality (*neyārtha*), which was potentially subject to challenge. Clearly, Silla Buddhists, and Wŏnhyo in particular, would have welcomed a sūtra—a definitive (*nitārtha*) scripture spoken by the Buddha himself—that would support the positions of *Awakening of Faith* and, by extension, the philosophical outlook of their entire tradition. Whoever the author of the *Vajrasamādhi* was, the tack his composition took shows that he was aware of the sensibilities of the scholastic climate of the time, if not actually in contact with, or a part of, the Silla academic coterie.¹³⁷

But resolving this philosophical conflict scholastically was apparently not enough for Wŏnhyo. As seen in his biographies, Wŏnhyo also advocated and acted out in person a faith-oriented approach to practice, which would help to fix this syncretic vision in the minds of Buddhist followers. Several of Wŏnhyo's works are concerned with Pure Land scriptures and recitation of the Buddha's name;¹³⁸ hence, it cannot be denied that religious praxis was any less important to Wŏnhyo than theological exegesis. It is interesting to note in this connection that even in his Pure Land writings, Wŏnhyo follows the same hermeneutic he forged in his *Kisillon-so*, basing his descriptions of Pure Land practice on the one mind and its two aspects.¹³⁹

I believe that it was these two concerns—resolving the philosophical conflict inherent in the Buddhist church of his day, and establishing a firm praxis foundation for his ecumenical vision—that prompted Wŏnhyo to renounce his retirement and work one final time on a commentary to the sūtra. Wŏnhyo appears to have seen in the *Vajrasamādhi* the ideal vehicle for amalga-

¹³⁷ See Kimura, "Kongōzammaikyō," p. 116. Han Kidu (*Silla Sŏn*, p. 23) has gone as far as to suggest that precisely because of the Ch'an/Sŏn elements in Wŏnhyo's *KSGR* (and thus by extension in *VS*, as will be discussed in detail in the following pages), "I believe that there was a thorough understanding of Sŏn thought among the Silla intelligentsia and that Sŏn was practiced in association with the scholastic teachings." Han does not, however, give any indication as to how these Buddhist scholiasts working on the peninsula would have come into contact with Sŏn, a movement with little currency even on the Chinese mainland at that time. Given that Wŏnhyo himself shows no signs of recognizing the Sŏn origins of some of the doctrines found in *VS*, I think that this surmise may be safely dismissed.

¹³⁸ These are listed in Tongguk taehakkyo, ed., *Han'guk Pulgyo ch'ongnok*, pp. 20–37, nos. 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 25, 26, 44, 79, 80, 84, 85, 86. For Wŏnhyo's works on Pure Land, see the survey in Kim Kangmo, "Shiragi Gangyō no bungakukan," pp. 124–30; see also Minamoto Hiroyuki, "Shiragi Jōdokyō no tokushoku," pp. 294–307; Etani Ryūkai, "Shiragi Gangyō no Jōdokyō shusō," pp. 71–92; An KyeHyŏn, *Silla Chōngt'ogyo sasangsa yŏn'gu*, pp. 11–68; Matsubayashi Kōshi, "Shiragi Jōdokyō no ichikōsatsu: Gangyō no Jōdokyō shusō o megutte," pp. 196–98.

¹³⁹ See discussion in Ko Ikchm, p. 254.

inating the syncretic principle he explores in *Kisillon-so* and *Simmun hwa-jaeng-ron* with this practice orientation that was so important to him personally. Wŏnhyo's commentary to the *Vajrasamādhi* employs many of the same sources used in writing his *Kisillon-so*; and like that earlier treatise—as indeed so much of his writing—*KSGR* too draws from the analysis of the one mind and its two aspects. In *KSGR*, however, Wŏnhyo moves in a slightly different direction and focuses his hermeneutical structure on the “contemplation practice that has but a single taste” (*ilmi kwanhaeng/i-wei kuan-hsing*). This “single taste” is an ancient metaphor used in Buddhist texts to describe the overriding soteriological import of the Buddhist teachings. The locus classicus for the term appears in the Pali *Cullavagga*: “As the vast ocean, oh monks, is impregnated with a single taste, the taste of salt, so too, monks, is my Dharma and Vinaya impregnated with but a single taste, the taste of liberation.”¹⁴⁰ His explication of each chapter of the *Vajrasamādhi* is made in terms of a particular type of meditative practice, finally culminating in this “single-taste” contemplation. Wŏnhyo summarizes his approach to the text succinctly in the preface to his commentary, where he clarifies the progressive relationship that pertains between the different chapters of the scripture.

The practice of nonproduction arcanelly harmonizes with the signless. The signless dharmas correspondingly become the inspiration of original [enlightenment]. Since this inspiration is the original inspiration and yet is gainless, it does not waver from the edge of reality. Since this limit is the edge of reality and yet is distinct from the nature, the true limit is also void. All the buddhas, the tathāgatas, are stored therein and all bodhisattvas accordingly access it. Thus, reference is made to accessing the tathāgatarbha. These are the principal ideas of each of the six chapters [of the main body of this sūtra].

In the approach to contemplation [outlined in this sūtra], there are six practices established, from initial resolute faith through equal enlightenment. When the six practices are completed, the ninth consciousness appears via an evolutionary process. The manifestation of this immaculate consciousness (*amalavijñāna*) is the pure *dharmadhātu*. The other eight consciousnesses evolve into the four wisdoms. Once these five dharmas are perfected, one is then furnished with the three bodies [of buddhahood]. In this wise, cause and fruition are not separate from phenomenal objects and wisdom. Since phenomenal objects and wisdom are free from duality, they have only a single

¹⁴⁰ See *Cullavagga* ix.14; for “single taste,” see also *Chieh-shen-mi ching* (*Sandhinirmocana-sūtra*) 1, T 676.16.692a25.

taste. Thus, the contemplation practice that has but a single taste is considered to be the theme of this sūtra.¹⁴¹

Hence, while employing the same philosophical principles used in his *Kisillon-so*, Wŏnhyo has tried in *KSGR* to extend their import into the realm of actual practice. The major step Wŏnhyo takes in his commentary, and the fundamental contribution it thus makes to Korean Buddhist philosophy, is to correlate this “contemplation practice that has a single taste” with the *tathāgatagarbha*. In so doing, Wŏnhyo fuses his ontological outlook with his view toward praxis, synthesizing around this contemplation practice the various intellectual and religious currents then prominent in Silla Buddhism.

As further substantiation for this interpretation, in his opening comments to the second prologue section of the *Vajrasamādhi*, Wŏnhyo gives four different hermeneutical schemata via which to examine the sūtra, each of which culminates in “the essence of the one-mind *tathāgatagarbha*,” or “the fountainhead of the *tathāgatagarbha* that has a single taste.”¹⁴² The second of these analyses is the most compelling.

The beginningless churnings of all deluded thoughts ordinarily result from nothing more than the affliction of discrimination, which derives from clinging to signs. Now, wishing to reverse this churning in order to return to the fountainhead, one must first negate all these signs. It is for this reason that [the sūtra] first explains the contemplation of the signless dharma.

But while all these signs may have been annihilated, if one conserves the mind that contemplates (*yak chon kwansim/jo ts'un kwan-hsin*), then the mind that contemplates will continue to arise and one will not experience original enlightenment. Consequently, one must annihilate the arising of the mind. Therefore, this second chapter [of the main body of the text] illumines the practice of nonproduction.

Once one's practice produces nothing, one then experiences original enlightenment. Drawing from this [experience], one transforms beings and prompts them to gain the original inspiration. Hence, this third chapter elucidates the aspect of the inspiration of original enlightenment.

If, while relying on original enlightenment, one therewith inspires sentient beings, then those sentient beings in fact can leave behind falsity and access reality. Therefore, the fourth chapter elucidates the approach to the edge of reality.

¹⁴¹ *KSGR* 1, p. 961a–b.

¹⁴² *KSGR* 1, p. 963c18–19, 21–22. Ko Ikchin (pp 241 and 243) gives convenient charts outlining these different schemes.

One's internal practice is in fact signless and unproduced. External proselytism is in fact the original inspiration's accessing of reality. In this wise, the two types of benefit [of oneself and others] are replete with the myriads of spiritual practices. These all derive from the true nature and all conform to true voidness. Consequently, the fifth chapter elucidates the voidness of the true nature.

Relying on this true nature, the myriads of spiritual practices are perfected. One accesses the tathāgatagarbha's fountainhead that has a single taste. Therefore, the sixth chapter illumines the tathāgatagarbha.

Since one has returned to the fountainhead of the mind, one then has nothing more to do (*musōi/wu-so-wei*). As there is nothing more to do, there is nothing that has not been done. Hence, it is said that these six chapters therewith incorporate all the Mahāyāna.¹⁴³

In Wōnhyo's interpretation of the *Vajrasamādhi*, then, each chapter describes one aspect of the path toward accessing the tathāgatagarbha, which "includes completely all approaches [to dharma] and shows that they are equally of the same one taste."¹⁴⁴ In assessing the possible reasons for the composition of the *Vajrasamādhi* in Silla Korea, one would thus do well to keep in mind this close connection Wōnhyo saw between its syncretic philosophical outlook and its all-encompassing praxis.

But there was something more to the doctrinal teachings of the *Vajrasamādhi* that even the perspicacious Wōnhyo and his Silla colleagues missed. Some of its teachings, which they assumed derived from Indian sūtras or śāstras, actually had quite another source, of which they could not have known; and their ignorance of the real pedigree of those teachings left them totally oblivious to one of the *Vajrasamādhi*'s major agendas. That alternate source was a new indigenous movement within Chinese Buddhism, then in its incipency on the mainland, which was just making its way to Korea. It was Ch'an.

¹⁴³ KSGR 1, p. 963c9–20.

¹⁴⁴ KSGR 1, p. 963c25–26.

CHAPTER FOUR

CH'AN ELEMENTS IN THE *VAJRASAMĀDHI*: EVIDENCE FOR THE AUTHORSHIP OF THE SŪTRA

The principal inspiration the *Vajrasamādhi* gave Wŏnhyo was the link it could help forge between religious ideology and practice. There is one school of sinic Buddhism, in particular, that is closely identified with such interests: Ch'an, or Sŏn, as it is known in Korea. Wŏnhyo, who did not complete either of his two attempted pilgrimages to China, had no way of knowing of this school, which was only in its nascency in the latter part of the seventh century, when the sūtra was written. The advantage of hindsight allows us now, however, to see several distinct Ch'an influences in the *Vajrasamādhi*, especially in chapter 5, "Approaching the Edge of Reality." These include references both to the "two accesses" (*iip/erh-ju*) soteriological schema attributed to Bodhidharma and to the "guarding the one" (*suil/shou-i*) or "guarding the mind" (*susim/shou-hsin*) contemplative approach of the East Mountain school of Tao-hsin and Hung-jen. Wŏnhyo of course could not have known the pedigree of these teachings. But could it be that, in his focus on the contemplative (*kwanhaeng/kuan-hsing*) implications of the *Vajrasamādhi*, Wŏnhyo has given us a key to unlock the problem of the authorship of the text?

Ch'an Influences in the *Vajrasamādhi*

Ch'an and the Sinicization of Meditation

No school of Buddhism developed in a vacuum, isolated from the philosophical and praxis currents buffeting its contemporaries. This is true even for the Ch'an school, which has most vehemently claimed its independence from the rest of the Buddhist tradition. The previous chapter demonstrated

that the author of the *Vajrasamādhi* was certainly familiar with the scholastic controversies that helped to mature the indigenous doctrinal schools of East Asian Buddhism. But the Ch'an elements in the text show too that he was aware of new movements in Sinitic Buddhism that would ultimately evolve into a full-fledged Ch'an "school."

We have already noted the East Asian penchant for subitist soteriologies, in which enlightenment was made accessible through a "re-visioning" of one's ordinary perceptual processes. But if this subitism was to take practical form, specific meditative techniques had to be developed that would catalyze this instantaneous awakening. In adopting the name "Meditation" (*ch'an*; *dhyāna*) for itself, Ch'an was laying claim to a special niche in East Asian Buddhism: it would be the school most concerned with creating new, truly Sinitic, methods of contemplation. This adaptation of Buddhist meditation to East Asian cultural sensibilities began with the T'ien-t'ai school, but the most protracted experiments took place in Ch'an. This process would culminate in the Sung dynasty, when Ch'an developed the mature techniques of "public cases" (*kung-an*; Kor. *kongan*) and "critical phrases" (*hua-t'ou*; Kor. *hwadu*), which are quintessentially, and exclusively, the provenance of the Ch'an school.¹ But these experiments had already begun in earnest by the time the *Vajrasamādhi* was written; indeed, the sūtra provides some of the earliest documentation available of the practices attributed to two of the earliest figures in the school, Bodhidharma and Tao-hsin.

It was inevitable that meditation would come within the purview of the same process of Sinitization that was spurring doctrinal innovation in East Asian Buddhism. Buddhism had always valued a pragmatic approach to religion, in which its teachings were claimed to have been conceived through, and their truths attested by, explicit meditative programs. Because of the inseparable connection in Buddhism among its ontological views, soteriological regimens, and meditative techniques, change occurring in one area would invariably have an impact on the others. This is precisely what was occurring in sixth- and seventh-century East Asia. I have already discussed some aspects of the doctrinal evolution then occurring in Sinitic Buddhism and how these are reflected in the *Vajrasamādhi*. But the sūtra also provides evidence concerning related meditative innovations. These innovations will be the focus of this chapter.

Despite the Ch'an elements appearing in this sūtra, the *Vajrasamādhi* can

¹ I discuss the evolution of these mature Ch'an meditative techniques in my article "K'an-hua Meditation," esp. pp. 343–56.

hardly be considered an apologia, since only a relatively small portion of the text involves ideas that could have been identified as exclusively Ch'an. But this weighting in itself tells us something important about the school. Despite the claim it eventually makes of being a "separate transmission outside the teachings," Ch'an's early adepts were well aware of the issues and problems debated within the scholastic traditions of East Asian Buddhism, if not central figures themselves in those debates. Ch'an advocates were certainly acquainted with the specifics of the debate then raging between Ti-lun and She-lun advocates over the nature of the mind. Ch'an adherents mentioned in the biography of Hui-k'o (ca. 485–593), the putative second patriarch of Ch'an, were said, for example, to have based their teachings on the *She-lun*,² and the *Ti-lun* is cited in early Ch'an writings attributed to both Hui-k'o and Hung-jen.³ Hence, there is evidence to support affinities between these learned traditions of Mahāyāna and early Ch'an.⁴ Indeed, based on the testimony of the *Vajrasamādhi*, one may go so far as to claim that the Ch'an Problematik was framed by the same controversy then occupying sinic Buddhist philosophers.

Even the legends Ch'an later tells about the school's putative founder, Bodhidharma,⁵ hardly suggest a school isolated from the mainstream of the Chinese tradition. The earliest work of the Ch'an school, *Erh-ju ssu-hsing lun* (Treatise on the two accesses and four practices), which is ascribed to Bodhidharma, proclaims in its opening lines that one of its two principal soteriologies is to "awaken to the source by relying on the teachings."⁶ Ch'an often seems to place as much emphasis on Tathāgatagarbha thought as that seen in the writings belonging to the learned traditions of Chinese Buddhism.⁷ Bodhidharma is said, for example, to have initiated the Ch'an trans-

² See the notice in the biography of Fa-ch'ung (589–665?), *Hsu Kao-seng chuan* 25, T 2060.50.366b20, translated in McRae, p. 26.

³ See Hui-k'o's biography in *Leng-ch'ieh shih-tzu chi*, T 2837.85.1285c3; *Hsiu-hsin yao lun*, T 2011.48.377a21, translated in McRae, pp. 121–22. It should be noted, however, that this quotation does not appear in any known recension of the *Ti-lun*; see Yanagida, *Shoki no Zenshi*, vol. 1, p. 152; noted in McRae, p. 313 n. 42, who suggests that the *Leng-ch'ieh shih-tzu chi* citation is taken from the *Hsiu-hsin yao lun*.

⁴ See discussion in Kamata Shigeo and Ueyama Shunpei, *Bukkyō no shisō VII (Chūgoku Zen)*, p. 113; Yanagida Seizan, *Shoki no Zenshi*, vol. 2, pp. 152ff; Suzuki Daisetsu, *Zen shisōshi kenkyū*, pp. 304ff; Jorgensen, "Long Scroll," p. 94.

⁵ See the discussion in Bernard Faure, "Bodhidharma as Textual and Religious Paradigm," pp. 187–98.

⁶ I use the edition of *Erh-ju ssu-hsing lun* included in Yanagida Seizan, trans., *Daruma no goroku*, here p. 31. Cf. *Hsü Kao-seng chuan*, T 2060.50.551c8. This passage is cited in Chung-chüeh's *Leng-ch'ieh shih-tzu chi*, T 2837 85.1285a12.

⁷ Hattori Masaaki has gone so far as to suggest that Ch'an in fact derives from the Tathā-

mission in China by handing down the *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra*,⁸ one of the first texts to use the tathāgatagarbha concept synthetically, a use that is also prominent in the Chinese doctrinal systems. The career of *Erh-ju ssu-hsing lun*'s redactor, T'an-lin (fl. 506–574), is particularly striking in the context of the larger concern with the philosophical origins of Ch'an. Besides being an assistant to a number of Indian translators, T'an-lin is also said to have lectured upon, and written commentaries to, the *Śrīmālā* and *Nirvāṇa* sūtras, both texts dealing with Tathāgatagarbha doctrine.⁹ Indeed, if T'an-lin's doctrinal interests were in any way representative of those of his Chinese contemporaries associated with Ch'an, we have a graphic example of the seminal role played by the tathāgatagarbha theory in Ch'an's early evolution. The author of the *Vajrasamādhi* too seems to have been particularly attracted to Tathāgatagarbha thought and it occupies a central place in the teachings of the scripture, even lending its name to the seventh chapter. But by combining Ch'an and doctrinal elements in the same text, the *Vajrasamādhi* provides invaluable information concerning both the Tathāgatagarbha underpinnings of Ch'an praxis and the ideological milieu out of which Ch'an evolved. This synthesis will reveal once more the strong affinities that pertain between the different schools of Sinitic Buddhism.

The Two-Accesses Soteriological Schema

By far the most celebrated section of the *Vajrasamādhi* is chapter 5's treatment of the two accesses of principle (*iip/li-ju*) and practice (*haengnip/hsing-ju*). This dichotomy occupies a vital place in the early evolution of Ch'an doctrine, for it is the general rubric from which is constructed Bodhidharma's *Erh-ju ssu-hsing lun* (Treatise on the two accesses and four practices). This treatise is generally regarded as the earliest work with an explicitly Ch'an pedigree, and probably the only of the many works ascribed to Bodhidharma that has the slightest chance of being in any way associated with him. The first modern scholar to discover the affinity between *Erh-ju ssu-*

gatagarbha strand in Indian Buddhist thought; see his "Zen to Indo bukk'yō," pp. 509–24, esp. p. 520.

⁸ See the biography of Hui-k'o in *Hsü Kao-seng chuan* 16, T 2060.50.552b20–22. Although the Northern school tried to authenticate this connection between early Ch'an and the *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra* by compiling a history of the "masters and disciples of the Laṅkāvatāra" (*Leng-ch'ieh shih-tzu chi*; T 2837), the connection remains tenuous; see McRae, pp. 90–91.

⁹ See Tao-hsüan's *Hsü Kao-seng chuan* 16, T 2060.50.552b17 and 431c25, in the biography of Hui-k'o; Liebenthal, pp. 351–55, and pp. 384–85 for a table of T'an-lin's translations; McRae, pp. 23–24.

hsing lun and this section of the *Vajrasamādhi* was Hayashi Taiun, who proposed that the *Vajrasamādhi* was the scriptural source for this distinctive teaching of Bodhidharma.¹⁰ (To give credit where credit is due, I should note that the Ch'ing commentator Chu-chen had made the same observation long before.¹¹) Hayashi's hypothesis prompted a series of studies that sought to determine the relationship between the two texts.¹² These culminated in the research of Mizuno Kōgen, who conclusively demonstrated that the *Vajrasamādhi's* account of the two accesses was copied from the Bodhidharma text, not vice versa.¹³ This radical theory revolutionized our view of the *Vajrasamādhi* and suggested for the first time that the very authenticity of the sūtra itself was now in question. Clearly, too, the affinities between the two texts would thenceforth figure importantly in any attempt to ascertain the dating and authorship of the *Vajrasamādhi*.

The *Erh-ju ssu-hsing lun* is a treatise with a complicated textual history.¹⁴ The text is certainly not of Indian provenance, since it includes passages lifted verbatim from earlier Chinese translations of both sūtra and śāstra literature. The present scholarly consensus is that the treatise was written by T'an-lin, a close associate of Bodhidharma's successor, Hui-k'o. The extent to which the text reflects Bodhidharma's actual teachings is purely speculative, though it does not require a great leap of imagination to presume that it might constitute T'an-lin's presentation of, at least, Hui-k'o's knowledge of Bodhidharma's thought. By the middle of the seventh century, only a few decades before the *Vajrasamādhi* was written, *Erh-ju ssu-hsing lun* was circulating under Bodhidharma's name and from that point on was regarded as the principal statement of his teachings. Ancillary materials attributed to

¹⁰ Hayashi Taiun, "Bodaidarumaden no kenkyū," pp. 62–72.

¹¹ Chu-chen, after giving the text of the *Erh-ju ssu-hsing lun* in his commentary to the two-accesses section of *VS*, notes that "this teaching of the first patriarch was established on the basis of this sūtra [*VS*]." *T'ung-tsung chi* 7, p. 264b9–10.

¹² These include studies by such prominent scholars as Suzuki Daisetsu, "Daruma no Zembō to shisō oyobi sono ta"; and Paul Demiéville, *Le concile de Lhasa*, p. 54 n. 2.

¹³ Mizuno, pp. 51ff; see also discussion in Liebenthal (pp. 349–56) and Han Kidu (*Silla Sōn*, pp. 29–31).

¹⁴ For a lengthy discussion of the textual history of *Erh-ju ssu-hsing lun*, drawing on much of the relevant Japanese scholarship, see Jorgensen, "Long Scroll," pp. 359–62, 377–78. The text has been expertly translated and annotated by Yanagida Seizan, *Daruma no goroku*. Annotated English translations of *Erh-ju ssu-hsing lun*, with most of its supplementary materials, appear in McRae, pp. 102–106, and Jorgensen, "Long Scroll," pp. 239–358. The text has recently been rendered into French in Bernard Faure, *Le Traité de Bodhidharma*. The Tibetan translation of *Erh-ju ssu-hsing lun* has been studied by Okamoto Katsumi, "Chibetto yaku Ninyūshigyōron ni tsuite," pp. 999–92 (sic).

Bodhidharma's disciples continued to be appended to the treatise perhaps as late as the 680s, but the structure of the text was fairly well standardized in the period with which we are concerned here.

The term "access" (*ip/ju*), which figures so prominently in the treatise, is often used in Chinese compounds to render Sanskrit terms expressing entry into such higher reaches of Buddhist spirituality as *samādhi* (*ju-ting*; *samādhīpraviṣṭa*); *samāpatti*, or attainment (*ju-kuan*; *samāpanna*); *niyāmāvākṛānti*, or the certitude of attaining enlightenment (*ju cheng-ting wei*); and even *nirvāṇa* (*ju nieh-p'an*; *parinirvṛta*).¹⁵ "Access" was sometimes itself equivalent to *dhyāna* in Sinitic apocrypha, a usage found in the sixth-century *Tsui-miao-sheng ting ching* (Book of the most sublime and supreme *dhyāna*).¹⁶ The term is frequently found in Chinese scholastic and Ch'an texts in the compound "to access the path" (*ju-tao*), the virtual equivalent of enlightenment, or *bodhi*. It is this compound that apparently inspired the description of the path found in the apocryphal *P'u-sa ying-lo pen-yeh ching* as a "teaching of the six accesses" (*liu-ju fa-men*). There, the accesses correspond to six basic levels of the *mārga*: the ten abidings, ten practices, ten transferences, ten *bhūmis*, immaculate *bhūmi*, and sublime-enlightenment *bhūmi*. In addition, the *Ying-lo ching* also includes a preliminary level of the *mārga*—the ten faiths—preceding the formal initiation to the *bodhisattva* path that occurs at the first stage of the ten abidings.¹⁷ These levels closely parallel the *Vajrasamādhi*'s division of the *mārga* into "six practices" (*yukhaeng/liu-hsing*), which are listed following the discussion on the two accesses: the ten faiths, ten abid-

¹⁵ For listings of such compounds, see Hirakawa Akira et al., eds., *Index to the Abhidharma-kośabhāṣya*, part 2, pp. 368–69, ad loc.

¹⁶ The *Tsui-miao-sheng ting ching* appears first in catalogues in 594. The scripture, which sought to synthesize variant theories about contemplation practice current during the late sixth century, calls *ju* the equivalent of the third *dhyāna*. See the study and edition of the Tun-huang recension of the scripture in the appendix to Sekiguchi Shindai, *Tendai shikan no kenkyū*, pp. 379–402; for the passage in question, see p. 399.

¹⁷ For these six levels, see *P'u-sa ying-lo pen-yeh ching*, T 1485.24.1022b13–14 (which uses the term *liu-ju fa-men* for them), 1010b25, and 1017a5; the ten faiths are listed at p. 1011c2–8. Elsewhere, these six levels are expanded as "forty-two teachings to be clearly contemplated, which serve as the causes and fruitions of sagacity and sainthood"; p. 1022b4. When combined with the ten levels of faith, this expanded listing would provide the fifty-two total stages that would become *de rigueur* in the Hua-yen school's explication of the *mārga*. For a detailed study of the *mārga* schema of the *Ying-lo ching* and its impact on the Chinese Taoist tradition, see Stephen R. Bokenkamp, "Stages of Transcendence in Taoism." For a discussion of this sixfold schema as it is systematized in the Hua-yen school, see Buswell, *Korean Approach*, pp. 50–52. On the apocryphalness of the *Ying-lo ching*, see Mochizuki Shinkō, *Bukkyō kyōten seiritsu shiron*, pp. 471–84.

ings, ten practices, ten transferences, ten *bhūmis*, and equal enlightenment.¹⁸ The juxtaposition of "access" and "practice" in these two indigenous sūtras suggests the fluidity in the connotations of the two terms, a feature noticed by Wōnhyo in his commentary to this section, which will be discussed below.

The term "access of principle" is not, however, attested in any translations of Indian or Serindian materials, and it seems to be an indigenous Chinese concept. Some of the closest parallels to "access of principle" as used in the Bodhidharma text and the *Vajrasamādhi* are found in the works of Tao-sheng (d. 434), one of the most creative exegetes in the early Chinese church. In his remarks concerning the *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa*'s reference to voidness itself being void, Tao-sheng uses the phrase "gain awakening by availing oneself of the principle," in which principle is construed as the equivalent of voidness.¹⁹ In his commentary to the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra*, Tao-sheng describes principle in a way that is evocative of some of the specific terminology that will be used later in *Erh-ju ssu-hsing lun*: "Now, the true principle is natural and awakening is also in arcane accordance with it. The true principle is free from deviation; so how could awakening prompt any change? That unchanging essence is pellucid and ever radiant. It becomes perverted merely through ignorance, so that events are then no longer in your control. If you can restrain seeking, you will then turn away from ignorance and return to the ultimate. Once you have returned to the ultimate and gained the root, [the principle] will be just like it was at its nascency."²⁰

The *Erh-ju ssu-hsing lun*'s account of the two accesses is quoted in Tao-hsüan's (596–667) biography of Bodhidharma, which appears in his *Hsü Kao-seng chuan* (Supplement to the biographies of eminent monks), compiled ca. 649, about a century and a half after the presumed date of Bodhidharma's death, and some thirty years before the composition of the *Vajrasamādhi*.²¹ This citation is the terminus ad quem for Bodhidharma's connection to the teaching and proof that the *Vajrasamādhi* was not its source. But as with so many other doctrines in Ch'an, this idea need not

¹⁸ *VS*, chap. 5, before n. 70.

¹⁹ As quoted in Seng-chao's *Chu Wei-mo-chieh ching* 5, *T* 1775.38 373a21; cited in Yanagida, *Daruma no goroku*, p. 37; Jorgensen, "Long Scroll," p. 243 n. 1

²⁰ *Ta-pan-nieh-p'an ching chi-chieh* 1, *T* 1763.37.377b10–13; rendering adapted from Walter Liebenthal, "A Biography of Tao-sheng," p. 245. This passage is cited in Yanagida, *Daruma no goroku*, p. 39; and Jorgensen, "Long Scroll," p. 244.

²¹ *Hsü Kao-seng chuan* 61, *T* 2060.50.551c; the different versions of the schema are quoted and compared in Mizuno, pp. 51–52; cf. p. 34. Material continued to be added to this anthology until Tao-hsüan's death in 667.

have been the sole domain of any single school or teacher of Ch'an. Indeed, Tao-hsüan's association of this²² doctrine with Bodhidharma might well have clinched its traditional ascription to the first patriarch of Ch'an.²²

Table 4.1 will help clarify the close affinities in the accounts of the two accesses in *Erh-ju ssu-hsing lun* and the *Vajrasamādhi*, especially the access of principle.²³ To summarize, the first access, the access of principle, suggests a passive, but nonetheless direct, approach to spiritual training, in which the adept need merely realize that each and every person is endowed with the buddha-nature—that is, all have the capacity for enlightenment. The means proposed to affect this salvation is simply to have the student deny his mistaken view that he is deluded and have “deep faith” instead in the fact of his enlightenment. As T'an-lin mentions in his preface to *Erh-ju ssu-hsing lun*, the intent of this access is to bring about “pacification of mind” (*an-hsin*), a term used also in the *Vajrasamādhi*, which may alternatively be called “wall contemplation” (*pi-kuan*). Given the emphasis on the immanence of enlightenment, along with faith as the primary catalyst of realization, one can see that the access of principle shares profound affinities with Tathāgatagarbha thought. The description in section 5, where the true nature is said to be “obscured by adventitious sense-objects,” is in fact taken verbatim from the *Lañkāvatāra-sūtra*'s treatment of the tathāgatagarbha: “Although this tathāgatagarbha *cum* ālayavijñāna . . . is pure in its own-nature, it is *obscured by adventitious sense-objects*.”²⁴ On the basis of this earliest text of Ch'an, then, the Ch'an Problematik is clearly framed by the doctrinal and praxis orientations of mainstream sinitic Buddhism.

The account of the “access of practice” in the *Vajrasamādhi* shares few affinities with *Erh-ju ssu-hsing lun*. There are no specific correspondences in the accounts of the two texts, though there are some implicit similarities of perspective. The *Vajrasamādhi* describes the access of practice as the endeavor to keep the mind completely undisturbed, by ignoring all such dichotomies as self and others, clinging and rejection, and so forth. The detached perspective developed thereby leaves the mind open to a state beyond all dis-

²² The tendency for doctrines to float freely between different factions, only later to be ascribed to some eminent past figure, is seen, for example, in the *Platform sūtra*. See discussion in Carl Bielefeldt and Lewis Lancaster, “T'an Ching (Platform Scripture),” pp. 200–201, summarizing Yanagida's views, for which see Yanagida Seizan, *Shoki Zenshū shisho*, pp. 148–212, 253–78.

²³ *Erh-ju ssu-hsing lun*, Yanagida, trans., *Daruma no goroku*, pp. 31–32. The passage from VS appears in chap. 5, after n. 64.

²⁴ *Leng-ch'ieh-a-po-to-lo pao ching*, 4, T 670.16.510c1–2; cf. Suzuki, trans., *Lañkāvatāra Sūtra*, p. 192.

TABLE 4.1

The Treatment of the "Two Accesses" in *Erh-ju ssu-hsing lun* and the *Vajrasamādhi*

<i>Erh-ju ssu-hsing lun</i>	<i>Vajrasamādhi-sūtra</i>
1. Now there are many pathways by which to access the path, but essentially we can say there are but two types.	1. There are two accesses:
2. The first is the access of principle; the second is the access of practice.	2. the first is called the access of principle; the second is called the access of practice.
3. Access of principle means to awaken to the source of doctrine (<i>tsung</i>) by relying on the teaching.	3. Access of principle means
4. One has deep faith that living beings, whether ordinary persons or sages, have the same true nature .	4. one has deep faith that sentient beings are not different from the true nature , and thus are neither identical nor counterpoised.
5. [This true nature] is unable to appear clearly merely through being falsely obscured by adventitious sense objects .	5. [This true nature] is obscured and obstructed merely by adventitious sense objects .
6. If one abandons falsity and takes refuge in truth and abides frozen in will contemplation , then self and others, ordinary person and sage , will be one and the same.	6. Without either going or coming, one abides frozen in attentive contemplation . One contemplates according to truth that the buddha-nature is neither existent nor nonexistent. It is neither self nor others and is no different in either ordinary person or sage .
7. One abides firmly without wavering , and is never again swayed by the written teachings.	7. One abides firmly without wavering in the state of the adamant mind,
8. This is to be in arcane accordance with the principle, free from discrimination, calm , and inactive .	8. calm , quiet, inactive , and free from discrimination .
9. This is called the access of principle .	9. This is called the access of principle .

crimination, which can be neither accessed nor abandoned. That is the mind's natural state of purity.²⁵

Erh-ju ssu-hsing lun's account of the access of practice is considerably more detailed, dividing it into four specific types of cultivation. While it is not necessary to discuss each of these practices exhaustively, the progression they imply is worth explicating. The first stage, the practice of the requital of enmity (*pao-yüan hsing*), helps the student to control his reactions to unpleasant situations by instilling in him an awareness of the truth of karmic cause and effect: viz., that his suffering is merely the result of his previous enmity. The complementary practice that accords with conditions (*sui-yüan hsing*) reveals that pleasant situations too are but the reward of *karman* and encourages the student to remain indifferent to good as well as evil by understanding that there is no eternal soul (*anātman*). The practice of seeking nothing (*wu-so-chiu hsing*) creates a radical detachment from the things of the world by exposing to the student the truth of suffering and its proximate cause (i.e., craving). The final practice of according with the dharma (*ch'eng-fa hsing*) reveals the truth of emptiness, by which the adept comes to know the fundamental nonduality of all dharmas, rendering him able to perform any sort of practice (specifically the six *pāramitās*) without clinging to their individual characteristics. Tellingly, however, this consummate form of practice is said to reveal the "principle of the purity of the nature," which is accomplished through "resolute faith" (*adhimukti*). Hence, after leading the student through a progressive process of detachment—first to both suffering and pleasure, then to the causes of suffering, and finally to all things—the four practices ultimately converge with the access of principle's peculiar type of understanding and its principal soteriological technique of faith. The implication here is that the truth of Buddhism can be understood either directly without a progressive regimen (access of principle), or indirectly through a graduated series of steps (access of practice). In either case, however, the realization achieved is identical.

The eventual convergence of the access of practice with the access of principle is reminiscent of Chinese doctrinal taxonomies and anticipates the soteriological use of such taxonomies that will become common in Chinese Buddhism in the eighth and ninth centuries. In the four practices of the *Bodhidharma* text, there is a hierarchical progression of practices *cum* teachings, with each stage complementing the preceding practice and anticipating the practice that will follow. A similar progression is seen in *Chih-i*'s (538–597)

²⁵ *VS*, chap. 5, before n. 67.

hermeneutical rubric of the "five flavors," which draws on the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra*'s metaphor of the stages in the clarification of milk to describe the progressive profundity of various sūtras. In the same way that the cow produces milk, which is then clarified in turn into cream, curds, butter, and ghee, so too does the Buddha speak (1) the twelvefold division of the Hīnayāna canon, which is refined in turn into (2) the Hīnayāna sūtras, (3) the expanded (*vaipulya*) sūtras of the Mahāyāna, (4) the Prajñāpāramitā sūtras, and finally (5) the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra*, in which the doctrine of the buddha-nature is equated with ghee.²⁶ In this wise the ultimate insight of Buddhism presented to the Buddhist adept at the fifth level of the schema converges with the person of the Buddha himself who initiates the hermeneutical progression in the first place. We may also note Chih-i's placement of teachings aligned with Tathāgatagarbha thought at the apex of his doctrinal taxonomy, a tendency repeated subsequently in the T'ien-t'ai school (see *infra*).

A hermeneutical hierarchy that even more closely parallels the treatment of the two accesses in *Erh-ju ssu-hsing lun* is that developed by Hui-kuan (363–443), a scholar most closely identified with *Nirvāṇa Sūtra* exegesis. Hui-kuan is said to have bifurcated the Buddha's doctrine into two broad categories: the sudden (*tun-chiao*) teachings, represented by the *Avatamsaka-sūtra*, and the gradual (*chien-chiao*) teachings. The gradual teaching was then subdivided into five temporal periods, corresponding to (1) separate instructions given to followers of each of the three vehicles; (2) the teachings common to all three vehicles, viz., the Śūnyavāda teachings of the Prajñāpāramitā; (3) the critical teaching that exposed the fallacies in the Hīnayāna approach, which was represented by such texts as the *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa*; (4) the common destiny of the Mahāyāna, in which all three vehicles are merged together, as found in the *Lotus Sūtra*; and (5) the omnipresence of buddhahood, as taught in the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra*.²⁷ The parallel in its logical structure with the two accesses of the Bodhidharma text is even more remarkable in that Hui-kuan describes the sudden teaching as that which "manifests the principle," implying that the gradual teaching is more concerned with progressive soteriological regimens.

²⁶ See the account in *Ta-pan-meh-p'an ching* 13, T 375.12.690c28–691a6; translated in Neal Donner, "Sudden and Gradual Intimately Conjoined: Chih-i's T'ien-t'ai View," p. 209.

²⁷ See the excerpt from Hui-kuan's preface to his commentary on the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra*, which is no longer extant, in Chi-tsang's *San-lun hsuan-i*, T 1852.45.b4–14. This taxonomy is summarized in Leon Hurvitz, "Chih-i (538–597)," pp. 219–24, and discussed in Ōchō Enichi, "The Beginnings of Tenet Classification in China," pp. 91–94. See also the discussion of this taxonomy with reference to *Erh-ju ssu-hsing lun* in McRae, p. 343 n. 332.

Even in these two examples, one already sees anticipated the tendency for graduated programs to culminate in a final stage of insight that verifies the understanding that first catalyzed the process. The inspiration for this convergence of the beginning and end of training is the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra*'s renowned statement that the culmination of the path is identical to its inception: "When the thought of enlightenment is first aroused (*bodhicittotpāda*), right enlightenment is then achieved."²⁸ This correlation is brought out explicitly in the T'ien-t'ai school's temporal hierarchy of the teachings, which was systematized by Chan-jan (711–782) in the eighth century. In this taxonomy, the ultimate teaching of the dharma occurs first with (1) the direct enunciation of the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra*. Finding most people incapable of understanding this direct expression of truth, the Buddha decides to begin his dispensation over again with (2) the *Āgamas*, (3) the *vaipulya* sūtras, and (4) the *Prajñāpāramitā* sūtras. Only when the ability of sentient beings to understand his teachings has been sufficiently matured does the Buddha then teach the *Lotus* and *Nirvāṇa* sūtras, which are syntheses of the second, third, and fourth periods and which essentially duplicate the message presented first in the *Avataṃsaka*.²⁹ A similar logical progression is also seen in *Erh-ju ssu-hsing lun*, where the understanding perfected through the access of practice is identical to that finally achieved through the access of principle.

Neither *Erh-ju ssu-hsing lun* nor the *Vajrasamādhi* uses the terms sudden or gradual, as had Hui-kuan, to describe its soteriological approaches—testimony *ex silentio* that the sudden/gradual problem was not yet an issue in late-seventh-century Ch'an. Nevertheless it is easy to see how the single access of principle could be viewed as a more immediate approach to enlightenment than the four stages of the access of practice outlined in the Bodhidharma text. Hence, *Erh-ju ssu-hsing lun*'s description of Ch'an soteriology does seem to anticipate the eighth-century debate concerning subitism that would rage in Ch'an circles after Shen-hui's (684–758) polemical challenge to the primacy of the Northern school.

Even without using such terms, however, *Erh-ju ssu-hsing lun*'s description of the two accesses is still clearly soteriological in approach. Although the doctrinal taxonomies with which it most closely compares in structure were hermeneutical schemata, scriptural interpretation was not their sole function. Polemical considerations certainly played a part in ordering the

²⁸ *Hua-yen ching* 8, T 278.9.449c14; cf. *Hua-yen ching* 17, T 279.10.89a1–2.

²⁹ For the T'ien-t'ai temporal taxonomy see Hurvitz, "Chih-I," pp. 229–44, and Chappell, ed., *T'ien-t'ai*, pp. 53–67.

teachings, especially in the taxonomies that come to be characteristic of the mature Hua-yen and T'ien-t'ai schools.³⁰ But such taxonomies also were sometimes intended to have explicitly soteriological purposes. This new purpose is particularly pronounced in some of the taxonomies of Chih-yen (602–668) and, especially, Tsung-mi (780–841), which outline the specific levels of understanding through which the Buddhist votary evolves in the course of his career.³¹ This is precisely the intent of *Erh-ju ssu-hsing lun*: to forge a “soteriological hermeneutic” that would provide the Ch'an student with either a direct expression of Buddhist insight in the access of principle or a progressive unfolding of that insight through the four practices. Regardless of which of the two accesses the student may favor, either will lead to the identical gnoseological experience.

What is important to notice about the *Erh-ju ssu-hsing lun*'s presentation of Ch'an is that, during its nascency in the middle of the seventh century, Ch'an is grappling with a similar complex of issues as were exegetes in the learned schools of medieval Chinese Buddhism. And the mode of analysis it used to develop solutions to these problems was virtually identical to that used by learned Chinese exegetes. Clearly, Ch'an as reflected in this treatise defines itself in terms drawn from the larger Problematik of the Sinitic tradition as a whole; it has barely started the long process of developing its own unique rhetorical and pedagogical rubrics, its own distinctive terminology, and its own separate praxis agenda. It was these unique features that would eventually distinguish Ch'an as a fully independent school of Chinese Buddhism.

Wōnhyo's discussion of these two accesses is interesting for gauging the reaction that Buddhist exegetes unfamiliar with the nascent Ch'an movement would have had to its soteriological strategies. Wōnhyo's comments reveal that he was completely oblivious to the Ch'an origin of these two accesses. He treats them instead in the context of the mārga schemata of such sūtras as *Fan-wang ching* and *Jen-wang ching*, also Sinitic apocrypha. Wōnhyo regards the two accesses as part of a sequential soteriological program—the access of principle corresponding to the stages of the path prior to the *bhūmis*, the access by practice to the ten *bhūmis* and above. In Wōnhyo's interpretation, however, it is the access of principle that involves progressive

³⁰ I have treated some of these polemical purposes, and Ch'an's reaction to them, in my article “Ch'an Hermeneutics: A Korean View,” pp. 231–56.

³¹ This will be a major theme of Peter Gregory's forthcoming book, tentatively entitled “Tsung-mi's Synthetic Vision.” For Chih-yen's *Hua-yen ching nei-chang men teng-tsa k'ung-mu chang* 2, T 1870.45.556a–c, summarized in Gregory, “Tsung-mi,” chap. 2.

development, while the access of practice is more direct—a plausible conclusion if one only knew of the *Vajrasamādhi* version, which does not divide the second access into four substages.

“Access of principle”: it is called “access of principle” because, while it involves resolute faith (*adhimukti*) that is in accordance with the principle, it has not yet matured into the kind of practice that leads to realization. It is positioned prior to the *bhūmis*. “Access of practice”: it is called “access of practice” because it is cultivation that involves realization of the principle and thus accesses the practice of nonproduction. It takes place on the *bhūmis*.

In the section on access of principle there are four distinct passages. From “deep faith” to “adventitious sense-objects” is the access of the ten faiths. “Not identical” is said, because while that which characterizes sentient beings may not differ from the true nature, it is not identical to it. They are “not counterpoised” because they are neither identical nor different.

The second section “without either going or coming, one abides frozen in attentive contemplation” is the access of the ten abidings. Because one awakens to the fact that sentient beings are void, it is neither going nor coming. This is because one calms one’s mind via this experience of the voidness of the personality, attentively examining the fact that the buddha-nature is neither going nor coming.

The third section “contemplating according to truth that the buddha-nature is neither existent nor nonexistent” is the access of the ten practices. As one has already gained the voidness of dharmas, one relies on the experience of the voidness of dharmas and contemplates according to truth that the buddha-nature lacks neither the characteristics of dharmas [phenomenal reality] nor the nature of voidness [absolute truth].

The fourth section, “It is neither self nor others and is no different in ordinary person or sage,” explains the level of the ten transferences. As one has already gained the access of principle, self and others are balanced and void. Hence, the mind abides firmly, without retrogressing, like adamant. What the *Fan-wang ching* calls the ten adamants and the *Jen-wang ching* the ten firm minds are different designations for the ten transferences.³²

The access of practice, in distinction, represents the actual moment of enlightenment itself in Wōnhyo’s interpretation. In this access, the “deep faith” in the immanence of enlightenment engendered through the access of principle is verified through direct experience. The student then continues on to work for the benefit of both oneself and others.

³² *KSGR* 2, p. 985a19–985b3; for the sūtra passages to which Wōnhyo alludes, see *Fan-wang ching*, T 1484.24.997c23–26, and *Jen-wang ching*, T 245.8.826c10.

This section [on the access of practice] explains the access to realization that takes place on the *bhūmis*. “The mind has no bias or inclination” because the mind that is endowed with knowledge that accords with the principle is free from any mental disturbances, for the mind that experiences mental disturbances does not arise. “Its shadows are free from flux” because objects that accord with the principle remain separate from the three time-periods [of past, present, and future], for the shadows of the sense realms, which are continually in flux, never appear again. He does not seek anything, neither any worldly pleasures, nor even bodhi, the fruition of great nirvāṇa. Because he has penetrated to equanimity, which is free from this or that, he therefore is not buffeted by the “wind” of the sense-realms. This explains the access of practice that benefits oneself.

From “it rejects” onward is the practice that prompts others to this same access. Because he can leave behind all signs of person or dharmas by realizing the voidness of both, he can universally ferry across everyone. Although the mind is unproduced and free from any characteristics of objects, it nevertheless does not cling to that nature of calm extinction and never abandons any sentient being. It is for this reason that it is said, “it is free from either clinging or rejection.” These two kinds of practices [i.e., to benefit both oneself and others] are called the access of practice.³³

Wōnhyo’s interpretations of these two accesses shows that he did not presume that they heralded a new, even radical, form of Buddhism, but instead were variant renditions of soteriological regimens common in sinic Buddhist. Their description may have diverged slightly from the models he knew in the *sūtras*, but not sufficiently so as to be regarded as aberrant. What Wōnhyo and his fellow exegetes could not have known was that some of the *sūtras* that presented these comprehensive *mārga* schemata—such as the *Vajrasamādhi*—may have been written by Ch’an sympathizers precisely to provide such convergences.

“Guarding the One” and Early Ch’an Meditation

Another major, and potentially more provocative, Ch’an influence in the *Vajrasamādhi* is “guarding the one” (*suil/shou-i*) practice, which follows the discussion on the two accesses in chapter 5 of the *sūtra*. *Shou-i* is one of the earliest attempts by Ch’an adherents to frame the processes and practices of Buddhist meditation in terms drawn from the indigenous Chinese religious tradition. As will be seen, the philosophical insights that inspire the practice

³³ KSGR 2, p. 985b6–16.

of *shou-i* would have vital ramifications for the subsequent evolution of the Ch'an contemplative tradition.

"Guarding the one" is most closely associated with a faction of early Ch'an known as the "East Mountain dharma-gate," or Tung-shan fa-men. This appellation is typically reserved for the Ch'an descending from Tao-hsin and Hung-jen. Unfortunately, there are no extant works that can be proven to have been written by either man, and their teachings are known solely through accounts preserved in later Northern school doxographies³⁴—an imprecise way of determining their approaches at best and plain misleading at worst. The *Vajrasamādhi*'s discussion of *shou-i* provides one of the few independent sources of corroboration about this distinctive East Mountain meditation technique—virtually the only one outside of Northern school materials, in fact. And since the *Vajrasamādhi* predates the Northern school anthologies by at least two decades, its account of *shou-i* is one of the earliest in all of Ch'an-oriented literature.

Shou-i is a term with a venerable history in the indigenous religious tradition of Taoism. One of its earliest resonances appears in section 10 of the *Lao-tzu*: "Can you keep the spirit and embrace the one (*pao-i*) without departing from them?" As the immediate byproduct of the Tao itself, which itself gave rise in turn to everything else in the universe, the one served as the interstice between the conventional world of men and the transcendent world of the Tao.³⁵ This pivotal position prompted Wang Pi (226–249) to construe the *Lao-tzu*'s injunction to remain true to the one as enabling a way of life in which all things would come naturally under the adept's control, without having to force their allegiance.³⁶ In the *Chuang-tzu*, the one is taken as referring to the natural balance that pertains between all opposites once

³⁴ The distinction between the two groups may, however, be more hypothetical than real, since members of what is now called the "Northern school" (Pei-tsung) actually referred to themselves contemporaneously as followers of the East Mountain teachings. This is even the case with Shen-hsiu (606?–706), the man most closely associated with the label "Northern school"; see the notice in *Leng-ch'ieh shih-tzu chi*, T 2837.85.1290b2; Yanagida, *Shoki no Zenshi*, vol. 1, p. 298; and see discussion in McRae, pp. 8–10. To show how ambiguous the appellation was, Tung-shan fa-men is used in a mid-eighth-century cenotaph to refer to the Ch'an movement as a whole, in distinction to the T'ien-t'ai school; see McRae, p. 9 and p. 275 n. 27.

³⁵ See the *Lao-tzu*, sections 10 and 42, for these two references; Ariane Rump and Wing-tsit Chan, trans., *Commentary on the Lao Tzu by Wang Pi*, pp. 29, 128.

³⁶ "The One is the true nature of man. It means that if you can always dwell in the eternal abode, embrace the One, keep the spirit clear, and are able never to depart from them, 'all things would submit spontaneously.'" Rump and Chan, *Wang Pi*, p. 29. A similar term in the *Lao-tzu* is *shou-chung* (lit., "guard the center"), which appears in sect. 5: "Much talk will, of course, come to a dead end. It is better to keep to the center (*shou-chung*)."

freed from human intervention and guarding that one as the way to bring about personal immortality: "I guard this unity (*shou-i*), abide in this harmony, and therefore I have kept myself alive for twelve hundred years, and never has my body suffered any decay."³⁷

But this "one" was not merely an abstract, philosophical concept. The evolution of Taoism as an organized religious tradition saw its gradual hypostatization as a personal deity, the Supreme One (T'ai-i), or even a trinity, the Three Ones (San-i).³⁸ As a probable result of influence from the incoming Mahāyāna tradition, with its vast pantheons of buddhas, bodhisattvas, and celestial deities,³⁹ religious Taoists came to view their world as populated by a myriad of "heavenly worthies" (*t'ien-tsun*). These gods retained and passed down to progressively lower levels of heaven the highest truths of the Supreme Lord Lao (T'ai-shang Lao-chün), the deified Lao-tzu, until finally those truths became known to humans. But the Taoists did not insist that their adepts ascend to the most rarified levels of heaven to gain access to this knowledge of the Tao. Because the human body was considered to be the microcosmic counterpart of the macrocosmic universe, the heavenly gods were in fact present within one's own body. Such correspondences are drawn in considerable detail in Taoist texts, the skull, for example, being regarded as the vault of heaven; the two eyes as the sun and moon; the veins, the rivers of the world, and so on, ad infinitum. A total of some thirty-six thousand gods were calculated to be populating the body. Each of them was charged with guarding an allotted organ, joint, or bodily part against attack from baleful spirits or contaminating pneuma, which might cause those organs to malfunction and lead to death. Taoist visualization practice was intended to watch over those interior gods and ensure that they stayed in place, performing their guardianship; if the visualization were performed correctly, all the bodily organs would continue to function optimally, and the physical immortality that was the goal of Taoist practice would be assured.

But it would obviously be extremely difficult for even the most adept of meditators to keep watch over such a plethora of individual gods. The inevitable need to concentrate separately on each of those gods could lead to a neglect of the other gods and bring in turn physical disequilibrium and possibly death. Hence, the Taoists assumed that the anthropomorphized one,

³⁷ *Chuang-tzu*, chap. 11; Burton Watson, trans., *The Complete Works of Chuang-tzu*, p. 120.

³⁸ For the Three Ones, see Poul Anderson, *The Method of Holding the Three Ones: A Taoist Manual of Meditation of the Fourth Century A D*

³⁹ According to Henri Maspero, *Taoism and Chinese Religion*, p. 275.

the Supreme One, also dwelling within the body, had been assigned primary responsibility for supervising the disparate activities of all his underlings. Merely by keeping careful watch over this one chief god, then, the Taoist adept could ensure that the duties of all the other gods were properly discharged and the body in turn kept free from illness. This visualization technique, called “guarding the one,” had become the principal form of Taoist meditation by the sixth century, and thus should have been known to Chinese Buddhists, and especially to early Ch’an adepts, who often had rather eclectic backgrounds.⁴⁰

The first uses of the term *shou-i* in Buddhist materials appears in some of the earliest translations of Indian Buddhist meditative tracts, especially those made by An Shih-kao (312–385), the prolific Parthian translator. An often used the homophonous *shou-i* (guard mentality) to translate the quintessential Indian meditative concept of “mindfulness” (*smṛti*), its denotation of “guarding” or “protecting” being well suited to the Indian connotation of mindfulness as watching over one’s actions and thoughts. Perhaps the earliest usage of the variant term “guarding the mind” (*shou-hsin*), which is often found in East Mountain materials associated with Hung-jen, appears in an anonymous sūtra from the Pei-Liang region, the *Ta-ai-tao pi-ch’iu-ni ching* (Sūtra of the bhikṣuṇī Great Love of the Path), supposedly translated ca. 412–439—the same period, interestingly enough, as the *Vajrasamādhi* was alleged to have been translated. In that sūtra, “guarding the mind” is listed as one of eight things one must protect in order to gain enlightenment: guarding the will (*shou-chih*), eyes, ears, nose, mouth, body, thoughts (*shou-i*), and mind (*shou-hsin*).⁴¹ This list shows that “guarding” was equated with sensory restraint (*saṃvara*) or “guarding the sense-gates” (*indriyeṣu gupta-dvaratā*), which was the prerequisite to the full sensory withdrawal achieved during dhyāna.⁴²

⁴⁰ For the interior pantheon of gods and their relation to *shou-i*, see Henri Maspero, *Taoism and Chinese Religion*, pp. 272–83. The definitive studies of *shou-i* practice in the Taoist tradition are Yoshioka Yoshitoyo’s “Bukkyō no zenzō to Dōkyō no shuitsu,” pp. 109–25, continued in his “Shokū Dōkyō no shuitsu shisō to bukkyō: tokuni *Taiheikyō* o chūshin toshite,” pp. 61–82; both have been reprinted in volume 3 of Yoshioka’s *Bukkyō to Dōkyō*, pp. 285–314, 315–351. Extensive treatment of *shou-i* practice in the Taoist tradition may be found also in Isabelle Robinet’s *Méditation taoïste*, pp. 183–211. For the Chinese background to the *shou-i* practice of the East Mountain school, see Chappell, “Tao-hsin,” pp. 99–100; McRae, pp. 138–40; Faure, “One-Practice Samādhi,” pp. 112–14. Bernard Faure’s “La volonté d’orthodoxie,” pp. 858–72, provides a valuable philological examination of the term in both Buddhist and Taoist literature. For *shou-i* in *V/S*, see Takamine Ryōshū, *Kegon to Zen*, pp. 151–56.

⁴¹ *Ta-ai-tao pi-ch’iu-ni ching* 2, T 1478.24.951c27–29.

⁴² The relationship between *shou-i* and dhyāna is also brought out in one of the earliest

Early Ch'an usages of *shou-i* are typically found in texts associated with the East Mountain faction of Tao-hsin and Hung-jen. The locus classicus is Tao-hsin's description of "guarding the one" appearing in his *Ju-tao an-hsin yao-fang-pien fa-men* (Instructions on essential expedients for calming the mind and accessing the path). This text, which seems never to have circulated independently in China, is embedded in one of the earliest Ch'an doxographies, the *Leng-ch'ieh shih-tzu chi* (Record of the masters and disciples of the *Lankāvatāra*), compiled by the Northern Ch'an adept Ching-chüeh (683–750?), and dated to around 713.⁴³ Tao-hsin ascribes the Buddhist usage of *shou-i* to Fu *ta-shih* (Fu Hsi; 497–569), a renowned layman of the early Buddhist tradition in China, who is said to have taught the practice of "guarding the one without wavering" (*shou-i pu-i*).⁴⁴ In his discussion of five methods for realizing that "the Buddha is in fact the mind" (*fo chi-shih hsin*), Tao-hsin gives as the fifth:

translated scriptures, where *shou-i* is related to dhyanāpāramitā; see *Fo-shou p'u-sa nei-hsi liu po-lo-mi ching*, T 778.17.714b26–c1. The text illustrates the soteriological function of *shou-i* by noting that one should "guard the one and gain liberation" (*shou-i teh-tu*). This is a Latter Han translation by Yen Fo-t'iao (fl. 181–188), probably the first native Chinese translator

⁴³ The date of the *Leng-ch'ieh shih-tzu chi* is still somewhat controversial. Chappell ("Tao-hsin," p. 94) summarizes the research of Yanagida and Yin-shun, who date the text respectively to 716 and 720. Elsewhere, Yanagida Seizan ("The *Li-Tai Fa-Pao Chi* and the Ch'an Doctrine of Sudden Awakening," p. 17) dates it less specifically to the early period of Hsüan-tsung (713–755). McRae (p. 120) suggests the period between 713 and 720. The text has been translated in Yanagida Seizan, *Shoki no Zenshi*, vol. 1. A complete French translation with extensive annotations appears in Faure, "La volonté d'orthodoxie." An English translation has been made by J. C. Cleary in *Zen Dawn: Early Zen Texts from Tun Huang*, pp. 17–78; an annotated English rendering is in preparation by Jeffrey Broughton.

The authenticity of the *Ju-tao an-hsin yao-fang-pien fa-men* is also uncertain. Chappell notes the consensus of opinion that the Tao-hsin section of *Leng-ch'ieh shih-tzu chi* presents the text of Tao-hsin's *Ju-tao an-hsin yao-fang-pien fa-men*; "Tao-hsin," pp. 95 and 105 n. 45, citing Yanagida Seizan and Yin-shun. Chappell himself ("Tao-hsin," p. 105 n. 43), however, seems more suspicious of Tao-hsin's text and suggests that the work and the ideas it outlines "may all be products of early eighth century re-interpretation." This is the view taken by McRae, pp. 119–20. For Tao-hsin and his traditional place in the evolution of Ch'an see U1 Hakuju, *Zenshūshi kenkyū*, vol. 3, pp. 81–90; Heinrich Dumoulin, *A History of Zen Buddhism*, pp. 77–79; Takamine, *Keaton to Zen*, pp. 162–68; Martin Collcutt, "The Early Ch'an Monastic Rule," p. 172. His biography appears in *Li-tai fa-pao chi*, T 2075.51.181c–182a (translated and discussed in Yanagida Seizan, *Shoki no Zenshu*, vol. 2, pp. 86–92); *Ching-teh ch'uan-teng lu* 3, T 2076.51.222b–c; *Hsu Kao-seng chuan* 20, T 2060.50.606b–c.

⁴⁴ For Fu Hsi, see Chappell, "Tao-hsin," p. 125 n. 42. Faure notes, however, that this term does not appear in any of Fu Hsi's extant works; "Volonté d'orthodoxie," pp. 858–72. A parallel phrase, "guard mentation without wavering" (*shou-i pu-i*) replacing the logograph "one" with that for "mentation," is found also in the *Chin-shu* (Book of the Chin dynasty; Ssu-pu pei-yao ed.), ch. 37, p. 18b (Ching Wang-leng annals). The *Chin-shu* was compiled in the middle of the seventh century during the reign of T'ang T'ai-tsung (r. 626–649).

Guard the one without wavering (*shou-i pu-i*). To remain unflagging amid activity and stillness can enable the practitioner to see clearly the buddha-nature and quickly access the approach of dhyāna. The sūtras are all filled with many different types of contemplative techniques. Great Master Fu alone advocated guarding the one without wavering.⁴⁵

This practice was intended to reveal that all mental and physical phenomena were empty and tranquil and, in so doing, calm the ratiocinative processes that veiled the natural purity and quiescence of the mind.

To “guard the one without wavering” means to be intent on viewing the one thing [the buddha-mind] with this void and pure eye. Without asking whether it is day or night, devote yourself to remaining constantly unmoving. Should the mind be about to gallop off, quickly work to rein it back in. It is just like a cord binding a bird’s foot, which would hold the bird fast should it try to fly off. View the whole day through, unceasingly. Then, extinguished, the mind will become concentrated of itself.⁴⁶

There is little unique in such a description of Buddhist meditation. Indeed, its conjunctions with Mahāyāna attitudes toward contemplative practice are vastly more compelling than the differences of terminology or emphasis might suggest. There is, however, one subtle difference that will ultimately prove extremely important: the East Mountain school’s interpretation of *shou-i* neither demanded the preparatory steps, such as observing moral injunctions, that typically preceded formal meditation practice in Indian Buddhism nor posited that the practice of *shou-i* invariably evolved through a graduated series of stages.⁴⁷ The analogy provided for the soteriological process governing *shou-i* practice is that of an archer doing target practice: he should try over and over again to hit the bull’s-eye until he can do it consistently and thence train to hit the shafts of all his previous arrows until they stack up one upon the other. This same analogy of archery training would be used subsequently by such pioneering Ch’an thinkers as Shenhui and Tsung-mi to describe a subitist soteriological program.⁴⁸ In such an

⁴⁵ *Leng-ch’ieh shih-tzu chi*, T 2837.85.1288a20–22; this section has been translated in Chappell, “Tao-hsin,” p. 114. There is some controversy as to the reading of the character for Fu here; for an alternate translation, see Cleary, *Zen Dawn*, p. 57.

⁴⁶ *Leng-ch’ieh shih-tzu chi*, T 2837.85.1288b16–20; cf. Chappell, “Tao-hsin,” p. 116; McRae, p. 141; Cleary, *Zen Dawn*, p. 59.

⁴⁷ This is a point compellingly made in McRae, p. 143.

⁴⁸ More specifically, Tsung-mi, following Ch’eng-kuan, describes this as a sudden cultivation/gradual awakening schema. See my *Korean Approach*, p. 295, and Peter Gregory, “Sudden Enlightenment Followed by Gradual Cultivation,” pp. 279–320.

approach, the adept need not complete a sequential series of steps before enlightenment is ultimately attained; instead, he is simply to undertake the same identical practice until it becomes completely natural, at which point enlightenment is spontaneously consummated. Tao-hsin describes it as “focusing the mind thought-moment after thought-moment, until [that concentration] continues thought after thought. Once [one’s concentration] continues without respite, right mindfulness will be uninterrupted. Then right mindfulness will appear.”⁴⁹ When Tao-hsin notes that *shou-i* is intended to bring about the immediate vision that one’s own mind is itself buddha, he is suggesting that the student need not make himself enlightened, but should instead simply learn to allow his innate enlightenment to appear naturally. Hence, *shou-i* is one of the first statements of the Ch’an emphasis on subitism that would become its hallmark after the mid-eighth century. In adopting such a key concept from the indigenous Taoist tradition for its principal meditation technique, the East Mountain school may have been seeking to break free from the conceptual straitjacket of Indian meditative terminology, with its gradualistic overtones, and allow new, potentially innovative descriptions of Buddhist soteriology.⁵⁰

The connection drawn between *shou-i* practice and faith in the *Ju-tao an-hsin fa-men* also has important implications for the ideological bases of Ch’an meditation. Tao-hsin states explicitly that *shou-i* produces faith, which in turn catalyzes the “access to awakening.”⁵¹ Faith, as seen in the preceding chapter, was the principal soteriological tool of the Tathāgatagarbha stratum of Mahāyāna literature. The Tathāgatagarbha premise that enlightenment was inherent in the mind of each and every sentient being led to the conclusion that one need only accept—that is, believe fully in—that claim in order to realize one’s enlightenment. Tathāgatagarbha praxis as it was conceived in East Asian Buddhism thus results not in the person *becoming* enlightened (and thus changing his fundamental nature) but simply *being* enlightened (merely accepting that fundamental nature). The concept is therefore eminently, though not exclusively, suited to subitist interpretations.⁵² *Shou-i* was intended to produce precisely the same sort of acceptance in the stu-

⁴⁹ *Leng-ch’ieh shih-tzu chi*, T 2837.85.1288c1–2; cf. Chappell, p. 116–17; McRae, p. 141.

⁵⁰ I have argued that this concern was the major impetus to the evolution of Ch’an meditation in my article “*K’an-hua* Meditation.”

⁵¹ “None who engender faith through relying on this practice [of *shou-i*] will be unable to gain access to the right principle of nonproduction.” *Leng-ch’ieh shih-tzu chi*, T 2837.85.1288c24–1288a1; see Chappell, “Tao-hsin,” p. 118.

⁵² Note Luis Gómez’s cautions about the multivalency of the term tathāgatagarbha in his article, “Purifying Gold: The Metaphor of Effort and Intuition in Buddhist Thought,” pp. 94–96.

dent—as Tao-hsin notes, to realize that “buddha is in fact the mind.” Hence, *shou-i* may be one of the first attempts within Ch’an to transform the Tathāgatarbha ideology into a practical contemplative technique. This tendency would persist throughout the subsequent evolution of Ch’an meditation, culminating ultimately in the *kanhwa/k’an-hua* (“observing the critical phrase”), or *kōan*, technique of the classical Lin-chi lineage.

More explicit information on the way in which this “guarding” was to be performed appears in *Hsiu-hsin yao-lun* (Essentials of cultivating the mind; alt. *Ch’oesangsūng-ron*, Treatise on the supreme vehicle), attributed to Tao-hsin’s successor, Hung-jen.⁵³ Instead of using *shou-i*—a term with heavy Taoist overtones that would have been known to any educated Chinese—to describe this practice, Hung-jen instead adopts *shou-hsin* (guarding the mind).

The pure minds of all sentient beings . . . are merely covered by the dark clouds of the mental disturbances, deluded thoughts, defilements, and all [wrong] views.⁵⁴ If one can merely guard the mind (*shou-hsin*) intently (*ning-jan*),⁵⁵ these deluded thoughts will not arise, and the nirvāṇa-dharma will naturally appear. . . .

⁵³ For the textual history of the *Hsiu-hsin yao-lun*, see McRae, pp. 309–12 n. 36. Tun-huang manuscripts of this text are extant, as well as a 1570 xylograph from Korea’s Ansim-sa bearing the title *Ch’oesangsūng-ron* (Ch. *Tsui-shang-sheng lun*). The Korean recension is reproduced in the *Taishō* tripiṭaka (T 2011.48.377a–379b). The attribution of the text to Hung-jen is doubtful; see Nukariya Kaiten, *Zengaku shisōshi*, pp. 371–74; Masunaga Reihō, “Shoki Zenshi to Dōgen zenshi no buppō,” p. 65; Yanagida, *Shoki Zenshū*, pp. 85 n. 7, 416 n. 7, 466. Ch’üan An (“Wutsu Hung-jen ch’an-shih,” p. 27) suggests that the text attempts to synthesize Bodhidharma’s “wall contemplation” and Tao-hsin’s “guarding the one” approaches; see also the discussion in Takamine, *Kegon to Zen*, pp. 168–72.

McRae (pp. 119–20) has argued that the *Hsiu-hsin yao lun*, attributed to Hung-jen, may have been written before Tao-hsin’s *Ju-tao an-hsin yao fang-pien fa-men*. McRae (p. 120) dates the Tao-hsin text to within a decade or so of the *Leng-ch’ieh shih-tzu chi* (written ca. 713–716) and suggests that Hung-jen’s work may represent a “lowest common denominator” of Ch’an theory around the year 700.” I find his argument convincing for the final form of the works themselves, but I suspect that the practice of *shou-i*, commonly associated with Tao-hsin, is earlier than Hung-jen’s *shou-hsin*. *Shou-hsin* looks to me like a reinterpretation of *shou-i* intended to expunge the inevitable Taoist implications of the latter term. The fact that *VS*, written before 686, uses *shou-i* also supports the view that *shou-i* is the earlier form of this teaching.

⁵⁴ This same passage appears with nearly identical wording in the biography of Hui-k’o in *Leng-ch’ieh shih-tzu chi*, T 2837.85.1285c10–12. It is possible that we see in this borrowing, as I shall bring out later in this chapter, another attempt to connect the lineages of Tao-hsin and Hung-jen with that of Bodhidharma and Hui-k’o

⁵⁵ A parallel phrase is found in *Shih-ti i-chi 1* (T 2758.85.237c21–24): “Since the bodhisattva’s mind is generated by the principle of the dharma-nature, . . . it guards the one intently (*shou-i ning-jan*) and is not generated by conditions.”

One should merely believe in the real truth and guard one's own original mind (*shou tzu pen-hsin*). For this reason, the *Vimalakīrtinīrdeśa* says, "There is neither own-nature nor other-nature. A dharma that originally is unproduced is now unextinguished."⁵⁶ One who awakens [to this principle] then leaves behind the two extremes [of existence and nonexistence] and accesses the nondiscriminative wisdom.

One who understands this principle should merely know the essentials of the dharma in regard to practice. [Of these,] guarding the mind is foremost. This principle of guarding the mind is, then, the basis of nirvāṇa and the essential approach for accessing the path. It is the principal theme of the twelvefold division of the scriptures, and the patriarch of all the buddhas of the three time-periods.⁵⁷

This entire treatise, in fact, is punctuated by such injunctions as "guard the mind," "guard one's original true mind" (*shou pen chen-hsin*), and so on, to the extent that there can be little doubt that the East Mountain school regarded *shou-i/shou-hsin* as its principal teaching.

The way in which *Hsiu-hsin yao lun* treats *shou-hsin* also adumbrates the underlying Tathāgatagarbha orientation of the East Mountain approach to practice. Hung-jen notes that "the essence of cultivating the path is to discern that one's own body and mind are originally pure, free from production and extinction, and beyond discrimination. The pure mind is perfect and complete in its self-nature—it is your original teacher."⁵⁸ This inherently pure self-nature is itself sufficient to act as both the catalyst and goal of liberation, paralleling the tathāgatagarbha's active soteriological role discussed in the preceding chapter. Perhaps the primary concern, then, of "guarding the mind" was to compell the student to remain constantly aware of the presence of the Buddha-nature in each and every moment of consciousness.⁵⁹

If one maintains unflagging attention to the inherent luminosity of the mind, the discriminative thought that obscures that radiance will not recur and nirvāṇa will be achieved. This ability of "guarding" to counteract thought and illusion is brought out in a number of sinitic texts. The *Fa-kuan*

⁵⁶ *Wei-mo-chieh so-shuo ching* [*Vimalakīrtinīrdeśa*], T 475.14.540b5–6.

⁵⁷ *Ch'oesangśūng-ron*, T 2011.48.377a26–b2; 377c8–13; cf. McRae, pp. 122, 124.

⁵⁸ *Ch'oesangśūng-ron*, T 2011.48.377a18–20; see McRae, p. 121.

⁵⁹ This sense of guarding as adhering to the primacy of the mind is adumbrated also in an early sūtra, the *Fa-kuan ching*, the translation of which is ascribed to Chu Fa-hu: "As worldly people are all attached to their bodies, they are as yet unable to abandon their bodies and guard mentality (*shou-i*)." *Fa-kuan ching*, T 611.15.240b26–27.

ching (Contemplating the dharma sūtra) notes that *shou-i* (guarding mentality) is a state achieved when thinking is eradicated: “To extinguish thoughts and rely on your own mentality is thence ‘guarding mentality.’”⁶⁰ *Shou-i* is treated as the opposite of discriminative thought in an inscription attributed to an anonymous dharma master of the Chou dynasty (684–704), who would have been a near-contemporary of the author of the *Vajrasamādhi*: “Be without much ratiocination or much knowledge. Much knowledge and many activities are not as good as extinguishing thought. Much ratiocination and many activities are not as good as guarding the one.”⁶¹ The *Pao-tsang lun* (Treatise on the precious storehouse), a Buddhist treatise attributed to the early Chinese Madhyamaka specialist Seng-chao (374–414), but probably written between 730 and 815, illustrates how guarding the mind serves to reveal the illusory nature of the world, and thence bring an end to ratiocination: “Everything is illusory, false, and unreal. [Once you] know the illusory as illusory, and guard truth and embrace the one (*shou-chen pao-i*), external things will not be defiled. Pure space, the Supreme One (T’ai-i)—how would they have deficiencies? Desert the mind and destroy thoughts; then the body will never suffer any illness. Once a single characteristic does not arise, all fortune and misfortune are obviated.”⁶²

Hsiu-hsin yao lun describes several different ways in which the actual practice of “guarding the mind” was to be carried out. In general these involve freeing the mind from any fixed locus, either externally in the sensory realms, internally within the seat of consciousness, or anywhere in between. From this detached perspective, one was simply to view the usual flow of consciousness until the fluctuations of mind disappeared of their own accord. The mind’s natural purity and tranquillity would then be restored spontaneously without forcing that change upon it.⁶³ This sense that compelling the mind to change only creates resistance to the final acceptance of intrinsic enlightenment would become a common theme in later Ch’an teachings, especially those of the Hung-chou school of Ma-tsu Tao-i (709–

⁶⁰ *Fa-kuan ching*, T 611.15 241b21.

⁶¹ *Chou Wei-pin sha-men wang-ming fa-shih hsi-hsin ming*, in *Tzu-men ching-hsun* 2, T 2023.48.1052a8–9.

⁶² See *Pao-tsang lun*, T 1857.45.145a26–29. The *Pao-tsang lun* was actually written sometime between 700 and 815; see Kamata, *Chūgoku Kegon shisōshi no kenkyū*, pp. 375–401.

⁶³ See *Ch’oesang-sung-ron*, T 2011.48 379a6–14; translated in McRae, pp. 130–31. See also Carl Bielefeldt’s excellent synopsis of East Mountain meditation in his “‘Secret’ of Zen Meditation,” pp. 140–42. There is an interesting parallel here with Wang Pi’s interpretation of *shou-i* as given in the opening paragraphs of this section.

788) with its emphasis on "spontaneity."⁶⁴ As with Tao-hsin's text, such descriptions of soteriology are particularly amenable to a subitist interpretation, since they can be construed not as involving any real modification in the quality of mind itself, but as simply a restoration of the mind's original state. Such techniques, then, do not involve any gradual transmutation of the mind and are equally appropriate for the rank beginner in spiritual practice as well as the most advanced of adepts. The focus in the East Mountain teachings on forms of meditation practice that are applicable to students at all stages of the path illustrates the "reductionistic" tendencies so typical in East Asian Buddhist meditation. Rather than seeing the goal of Buddhist practice as the sequential perfection of a series of steps, which finally culminate in the achievement of nirvāṇa, the East Mountain accounts instead reduce these many stages to a single overriding experience. This development will be important for evolving a style of meditation that was consistent in form and practice from beginning to end—the quintessence of the "sudden" style of meditation that becomes the Holy Grail of Ch'an.

The fifth chapter of the *Vajrasamādhi*, "Approaching the Edge of Reality," which includes the allusion to the two-accesses theory, follows with a discussion of *shou-i*.

"Bodhisattva! [You should] urge those sentient beings to preserve the three and guard the one, in order to access the tathāgatadhyaṇa. Due to this concentrated absorption, their minds will come to be free of panting."

Taeryōk Bodhisattva asked, "What do you mean by 'preserve the three and guard the one, in order to access the tathāgatadhyaṇa'?"

The Buddha replied, "'Preserve the three' means to preserve the three liberations. 'Guard the one' means to guard the thusness of the one mind. 'Access the tathāgatadhyaṇa' means the noumenal contemplation on the thusness of the mind. Accessing such a state is in fact what is meant by approaching the edge of reality."⁶⁵

The influence of the East Mountain teachings on this passage is difficult to deny. The gloss of *shou-i* as "guarding the thusness of the one mind" recalls especially the interpretation of "guarding" in Hung-jen's *Hsiu-hsin yao lun*, where the term is purged of some of its explicitly Taoist connotations by being reconceived as "guarding the mind" (*shou-hsin*). The *Vajrasamādhi*'s

⁶⁴ See the discussion in my "K'an-hua Meditation," pp. 338–41

⁶⁵ VS, chap. 5, after n. 73. The three liberations are the śūnya, vajra, and prañā vimokṣas; VS, chap. 5, after n. 74.

interpretation of *shou-i* in terms of the “thusness of the mind” clarifies *shou-i*’s affinities with *shou-hsin* and, by extension, the affinities between the practices ascribed to Tao-hsin and Hung-jen. By interpreting “guarding the one” as “guarding the thusness of the one mind,” the author of the *Vajrasamādhi* also brings out the Tathāgatagarbha antecedents of this form of practice, for, as seen in the previous chapter, one of the terms by which tathāgatagarbha was glossed was thusness (*tathatā*). This same connection is drawn also in the Hung-jen text, where the inherent purity of the mind is termed both “thusness” and “the buddha-nature of true thusness.”⁶⁶

The causal relationship the *Vajrasamādhi* draws between guarding the one and access of the tathāgatadhyāna is also indicative of the connection it makes between East Mountain practice and the ideology of the *Lañkāvatāra-sūtra*, one of the principal scriptural inspirations of early Ch’an. The concept of tathāgatadhyāna, the last and most profound of the four types of dhyāna discussed in the *Lañkāvatāra*,⁶⁷ also appears prominently in such Ch’an-oriented apocrypha as the *Vajrasamādhi* and *Śūramgama* sūtras. In this dhyāna, the full noetic experience of enlightenment infuses the bodhisattva’s active work on behalf of all beings, bringing about the perfect fusion of knowledge and conduct (*vidyācarana*). By equating access to the tathāgatadhyāna with access to the *bhūtakoti*, the *Vajrasamādhi* seeks to show that Ch’an enlightenment involves seeing both the interconnection of wisdom and action and the nonduality of the conscious subject and the perceived object.

The connection between the *Lañkāvatāra-sūtra* and the evolution of early Ch’an is still a debatable issue and has been openly challenged by some modern scholars, such as John McRae. Even McRae acknowledges, however, that while “there is no evidence that its contents had any particular impact on the development of the school . . . this scripture apparently had some kind of mysterious appeal to the followers of early Ch’an.”⁶⁸ The evidence, however, seems to suggest something more concrete than a “mysterious appeal.” The value for synthesizing Buddhist doctrine that the Chinese saw in the concepts of tathāgatagarbha and amalavijñāna was inspired by the *Lañkāvatāra*, and to that extent the sūtra could have influenced the evolution of Ch’an. The *Erh-ju ssu-hsing lun* displays clear affinities with the *Lañkāvatāra*,⁶⁹ and its putative author, Bodhidharma, is claimed to have initiated the

⁶⁶ *Ch’oesangsūng-ron*, T 2011.48 377b5; McRae, p. 122.

⁶⁷ *Leng-ch’ieh ching* 2, T 670.16.492a22–24; cf. *Ta-sheng ju Leng-ch’ieh ching* 3, T 672 16.602a12; Suzuki, trans., *Lañkāvatāra Sūtra*, pp. 85–86.

⁶⁸ McRae, p. 29.

⁶⁹ See Jorgensen, “*Long Scroll*,” pp. 179–239, esp. pp. 232–33.

Ch'an transmission by passing that sūtra on to his successors. One of the earliest histories of the Ch'an school, *Leng-ch'ieh shih-tzu chi*, seemingly identifies Ch'an with the sūtra, but the case made by the record's author, Ching-chüeh, in support of this claim is hardly convincing.⁷⁰ Rather than trying to view Ch'an as a systematic reading of the *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra*, in the same way that T'ien-t'ai claims to be of the *Lotus* or Hua-yen of the *Avataṃsaka*, it is more accurate to say instead that Ch'an was inspired by similar religious concerns. Certainly the author of the *Vajrasamādhi* knew the sūtra, even if his doctrinal formulations more commonly drew from the *Awakening of Faith* and other sinic elaborations of the *Laṅkāvatāra*'s distinctive interpretation of Tathāgatagarbha thought, rather than directly from the scripture itself. Indeed, it is in such Ch'an-oriented apocrypha as the *Vajrasamādhi* and *Śūramgama* sūtras that the legacy of the *Laṅkāvatāra* is particularly pronounced.

The context within which the *Vajrasamādhi* describes *shou-i* practice provides independent corroboration of later Northern school accounts of the East Mountain teachings. I have already pointed out the pronounced syncretic focus of the sūtra as a whole, as well as of its interpretation of *shou-i* practice in specific. The East Mountain teachings are also typically portrayed as having been broadly eclectic in spirit. This eclecticism is adumbrated by the sheer volume of citations included in Tao-hsin's *Ju-tao an-hsin fa-men*. Among the texts quoted by title in the treatise are such seminal scriptures to the East Asian tradition as the Śūnyavāda-aligned *Prajñāparamitā* and *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa* sūtras, the synthetic *Lotus Sūtra*, the "idealist" *Avataṃsaka*, *Nirvāṇa*, and *Laṅkāvatāra* sūtras, the principal Pure Land work, *Sukhāvativyūha-sūtra*, as well as sinic apocrypha like *Fo i-chiao ching* and *Fa-chü ching* (**Dharmapada*), and the indigenous Taoist texts *Lao-tzu* and *Chuang-tzu*. This wide range of materials supports David Chappell's characterization of Tao-hsin's thought as uniting "Pure Land, Yogācāra and Mādhyamika thinking in a typical act of Chinese syncretism by asserting that the Pure Land, Buddha-nature, the *tathāgatagarbha*, *nien-fō* [recitation of the Buddha's name], *nirvāṇa*, etc. are identical, while acknowledging that the methods of achieving this are endless."⁷¹

The affinities between Northern school accounts of Tao-hsin's teachings and the *Vajrasamādhi* are brought out also in a passage from the *Ju-tao an-hsin fa-men* that reads like a litany of the issues addressed in the *Vajrasamādhi*:

⁷⁰ See McRae, pp. 24–29, and 90–91 for a summary of the relevant scholarship.

⁷¹ Chappell, "Tao-hsin," p. 98.

One immediately views that this sort of mind is in fact the body of the tathāgata's real dharma-nature. It is also called the right dharma (*saddharma*). It is also called the buddha-nature. It is also called the real nature and edge of reality of all dharmas. It is also called the pure land. It is also called bodhi, vajrasamādhi, original enlightenment, and so forth. It is also called the nirvāṇa-element (*nirvāṇadhātu*), prajñā, and so on. Although its names are countless, they share the same one essence.⁷²

While it is still controversial whether the *Ju-tao an-hsin fa-men* as preserved in *Leng-ch'ieh shih-tzu chi* represents the authentic teachings of Tao-hsin himself, it at least provides a retrospective account of the East Mountain teachings as they were understood in the early part of the eighth century. The *Vajrasamādhi*, which predates these Northern school accounts by a few decades, corroborates in the terminology it employs and its general philosophical outlook this account of Tao-hsin's teachings.⁷³ Although the evidence is admittedly indirect, the convergence of the two accounts is striking enough to suggest that the *Leng-ch'ieh shih-tzu chi*'s account provides an accurate sense of the thrust of the East Mountain teachings.

Further corroboration of the East Mountain affinities of *shou-i* practice appears in a remarkable passage from an anonymous sūtra quoted in the *Hua-yen chin-kuan ch'ao* (Notes to the embroidered cap of the *Avatamsaka*), attributed to Tsung-mi's disciple Ch'u-an-ao *ta-shih* (ca. ninth century).

As a sūtra states, "Fix the mind at one spot and there is nothing you cannot do. Bind the mind at one spot and you will be able to open the gate of wisdom. *Guard the one without wavering* [emphasis added] and the spirit will not be distracted and the infinite numinosity will be sustained. When first training in the inscrutable samādhi (*pu-ssu-i san-mei*), you fix the mind on a single condition. But after practicing for a long time, viewing the mind (*k'an-hsin*) will be perfected; then there will be no further characteristics of mind (*hsin-hsiang*) and one will always be in conformity with dhyāna. Because all characteristics of mind are then precisely no-mind, it is called the inscrutable samādhi."⁷⁴

⁷² *Leng-ch'ieh shih-tzu chi*, T 2837.85.1287a17–20.

⁷³ See Philip Yampolsky's statement ("Early Ch'an History," p. 5) that *VS* "reflects the status of this East Mountain school in the late seventh century."

⁷⁴ For the passage from the *Hua-yen chin-kuan ch'ao* in which this sūtra passage appears, see the *Pōpkye toji ch'ongsu-rok* 2b, T 1887B.45.765c26–766a1. The *Hua-yen chin-kuan ch'ao* is no longer extant; it is cited in Üich'ön's scriptural catalogue (*Simp'yŏn chejong kyojang ch'ongnok* 1, T 2184.55.1167b6) as being in four (alternatively two) fascicles. The text seems to have been an explanation (or perhaps an outline) of Ch'eng-kuan's massive *Ta-fang-kuang fo Hua-yen ching*

There are striking elements drawn from the early Ch'an tradition in this passage. The four-logograph phrase "guard the one without wavering" is the clarion call of the East Mountain teachings and especially of Tao-hsin. "Viewing the mind" is a practice that appears frequently in East Mountain/Northern school materials. While "contemplating the mind" is treated somewhat ambivalently in materials attributed to Tao-hsin, the Northern school founder, Shen-hsiu (606?–706), devotes his first work, the *Kuan-hsin lun* (Treatise on contemplating the mind), to this practice. Shen-hsiu's comments in particular seem reminiscent of this sūtra's account, as for example, where he states that the mind that is viewed is "no-mind," and looking at that mind *cum* no-mind is vacuous, like looking into space.⁷⁵

A suggestive piece of evidence of both the apocryphal character of this unnamed sūtra and its sectarian affiliations is the fact that the first line of the citation—"Fix the mind at one spot and there is nothing you cannot do"—is taken verbatim from the *Fo i-chiao ching* (Book of the bequeathed teachings of the Buddha), another Chinese apocryphon. This line from the *I-chiao ching* is cited frequently in Ch'an sources and appears in both Tao-hsin's *Ju-tao an-hsin yao-fang-pien fa-men* and Hung-jen's *Hsiu-hsin yao-lun*.⁷⁶ Such phrases were the common property of the East Asian Buddhist tradition and served as the basic building blocks of indigenous textual composition; it is not unusual that two different apocryphal texts would include the same passage. It is only in this text, however, that this phrase is directly tied to the practice of *shou-i*. Given the doctrinal context within which this phrase is placed, the East Mountain pedigree of this unknown scripture is strongly suggested. The *Vajrasamādhi* may thus not have been the only attempt made to cloak in sūtra guise the teachings of the East Mountain Ch'an school.

shu (T 1735); see Buswell, *Korean Approach*, p. 357 n. 134 for references. The *Pōpkye toji ch'ongsu-rok* (Collected annotations to the *Chart of the Dharmadhātu*) is a late Koryō compilation of notes to Ŭisang's *Hwaōm ilsūng pōpkye-to* (Chart of the Hua-yen one-vehicle *dharmadhātu*); T 1887A.45 711a–716a. Its author is unknown, but it certainly postdates the Koryō Hwaōm exegete Kyunyō (923–973), who is quoted in the text; see Tongguk tachakkyo, ed., *Han'guk Pulgyo*, p. 161.

⁷⁵ See Faure, "The Concept of One-Practice Samādhi in Early Ch'an," pp. 114–16, for discussion. McRae (p. 119) dates the *Kuan-hsin lun* to ca. 675–700; for information on the text, see p. 325 n. 159; he discusses the text in detail, with several extensive excerpts, on pp. 198–209.

⁷⁶ *Fo i-chiao ching*, T 389 12.1111a20; cited in Tao-hsin's *Ju-tao an-hsin yao-fang-pien fa-men*, Chappell, "Tao-hsin," p. 116; Hung-jen's *Hsiu-hsin yao-lun*, T 2011.48.377c24–25; see also *Litai fa-pao chi*, T 2075.51.193a11–12. For the frequent Ch'an citation of this phrase, see Yanagida, *Shoki no Zenshu*, vol. 1, p. 245. For coverage of the apocryphal *Fo i-chiao ching*, and the equally spurious commentary to it attributed by tradition to Vasubandhu, see Mochizuki, *Bukkyō kyōten*, pp. 642–45.

Indeed, there are several such scriptures written during the early eighth century that have a pervasive Ch'an flavor; often too, they show the same orientation toward Tathāgatagarbha doctrine seen in the *Vajrasamādhi*. These include the *Ch'an-men ching* (Book of the Ch'an gate), *Shou-leng-yen ching*, *Fa-chü ching*, and *Fa-wang ching* (Book of the King of Dharma).⁷⁷ These affinities suggest that textual forgery may have been a common artifice for disseminating early Ch'an doctrine. Indeed, proselytization was one of the reasons Tao-hsüan cited in his *Ta T'ang nei-tien lu* (The great T'ang catalogue of Buddhist scriptures) for the composition of apocryphal scriptures.⁷⁸ The approach taken here for determining the provenance, dating, and authorship of the *Vajrasamādhi* may thus prove fruitful in exploring other indigenous sūtras with possible Ch'an affinities.

What would an East Asian scholiast sensitive to trends in the learned schools of Buddhism toward the end of the seventh century, but as yet oblivious to Ch'an, have made of the *Vajrasamādhi*'s references to *shou-i*? Wōnhyo's interpretation of *shou-i* is framed in terms of the *Awakening of Faith*'s distinction between the one mind and its two aspects. He takes *shou-i* as emphasizing the absolute, true-thusness aspect, which brings about the disappearance of the conventional production-and-extinction aspect, and presumes that the practice derives from the *P'u-sa ying-lo pen-yeh ching*. Wōnhyo asserts that *shou-i* is the meditation technique most appropriate to the level of the ten practices (*siphaeng/shih-hsing*), the third of the seven major divisions of the mārḡa (including the prerequisite stage of the ten faiths) outlined in the *Ying-lo ching*, which is accessed after the bodhisattva has already understood that he is inherently enlightened at the preceding level of the ten abidings.⁷⁹ Hence, "guarding the one" is principally concerned with pro-

⁷⁷ Of these, the *Ch'an-men ching* probably has the most immediate affinities with *VS*. *Ch'an-men ching* is a Chinese apocryphal scripture now known to have been written no later than 730, and probably between 695 and 701. The Stein manuscript from Tun-huang that Yabuki discovered includes a preface by Hui-kuang, which links the sūtra with the prominent Northern school teacher, P'u-chi (651–739). See Yabuki Keiki, *Meisha yoin kaisetsu*, part 2, pp. 289–93; Yanagida Seizan, *Shoki Zenshū*, pp. 311–12. The *Fa-chü ching* circulated at least by A.D. 645 and may have been composed by Ch'an adepts in the Bodhidharma line. It contains principally a summary of Prajñāpāramitā teachings, with few obvious Ch'an elements. *Fa-wang ching* was composed no later than 695, probably by someone within the Northern Ch'an lineage. It is strongly influenced by the *Ch'i-hsin lun* and the *Hua-yen ching* and incorporates a number of Taoist expressions into its presentation of Buddhism. See Okimoto Katsumi, "Zenshūshi ni okeru gikyō: Hōōkyō ni tsuite," pp. 27–61. For a survey of these and other related texts, see Okabe Kazuo, "Gigi kyōten," pp. 351–76.

⁷⁸ *Ta T'ang nei-tien lu* 1, T 2149.55.219b10.

⁷⁹ For the relevant passage, see *P'u-sa ying-lo pen-yeh ching*, T 1485.24.1014a2–6. See the previous discussion previously in this chapter for the mārḡa schema of the *Ying-lo ching*.

tecting the initial understanding of the tathāgatagarbha that initiates bodhisattvahood, in line with the treatment seen in the Hung-jen text. "There are two aspects," Wōnhyo writes,

to this dharma of the "one mind." Now, initially, one guards the true-thusness aspect of the mind, in order to subdue the power of the great dragon of ignorance, for ignorance is completely deluded about the thusness of the one mind. "Guard" in this context means that when the person accesses [that contemplation practice], he tranquilly guards the noetic experience of the one thusness, but when he withdraws [from that contemplation], he does not lose the mind that has a single taste. This is why it is called "guard the one." This is as explained in the "Ten Practices" section of the *Pen-yeh ching* . . . , where it is said that not losing the single taste of the Middle Way during all three time-periods is precisely what is meant by this contemplation's function of guarding the one. This contemplation takes place at the level of the ten practices.⁸⁰

The explicit tathāgatagarbha connotations of *shou-i* are also brought out in Chu-chen's interpretation. While Chu-chen, like Wōnhyo, shows no awareness of the Ch'an origins of *shou-i*, he associates that practice with the counterillumination (*fan-chao*) technique adumbrated elsewhere in the *Vajrasamādhi*, described previously as Ch'an's pragmatic reworking of Tathāgatagarbha thought. Chu-chen interprets both *shou-i* and *tsun-san* ("preserving the three") as types of dhyāna that bring about "calming of the mind" (*hsin-an*).

To direct the thoughts is called "preserve." To protect the thoughts is called "guard." "Tathāgatadhyāna [means] to revert (*fan*) to the pure essence of one's own nature. To absorb the mind and look back is called "contemplation." "Noumenal contemplation on the thusness of the mind" [means] that, by means of the true principle of one's own nature, one looks back on the one mind's essence of true thusness.⁸¹

Chu-chen's correlation here of *shou-i* and *tsun-san* is a convenient entry-point to the latter concept. The term "preserve" or "conserve" (*chon/tsun*) is

⁸⁰ *KSGR* 2, p. 987c8–15. Elsewhere, Wōnhyo refers to "guarding the thusness of the one mind" as a type of contemplation that involves realizing the voidness of dharmas. It occurs while the bodhisattva is involved in disseminating the teachings throughout the three realms of reality; *KSGR* 2, p. 988c24–26.

⁸¹ Chu-chen, *T'ung-tsung chi*, p. 269a14–16; Chu-chen follows with an explication of the meaning of tathāgatadhyāna.

considerably less common in Buddhist contemplative literature than is “guard,” and the *Vajrasamādhi*’s reference to preserving the three liberations seems to be unique. The logograph *tsun* is used in the Taoist tradition as a type of visualization or interiorization.⁸² The term most often appears in Ch’an texts in conjunction with mind, yielding a compound that typically is pejorative in connotation. Tao-hsin’s *Ju-tao fa-men*, for example, gives the following citation from the *Lao-tzu*: “Obscure and mysterious, within it is the essence.” Tao-hsin critiques this perspective as follows: “Although outwardly he denies characteristics, inwardly he still preserves the mind.”⁸³ The persistence of this sort of appraisal is attested by the similar criticism found in the Sung dynasty *kung-an* collection, *Wu-men kuan* (Gateless checkpoint), which states that “preserving the mind’s clarity and tranquillity is the perverse Ch’an of silent illumination (*mo-chao hsieh* Ch’an).”⁸⁴ Wōnhyo too criticizes “preserving the mind” as the inferior practice of the Hīnayāna:

The two-vehicle adherents et al. grasp at dharmas and preserve the mind (*chonsim*); they postulate the existence of a mind subject to production and extinction, which is impermanent. Therefore one must extirpate production and extinction in order to extinguish this view that the mind is preserved. . . . If one does not cling to production or extinction, there perforce will be no preservation of the mind.⁸⁵

The practice of “preserving the three” as advocated in the *Vajrasamādhi*, however, seems qualitatively different from its meaning in the compound “preserve the mind.” In this sūtra it is instead intended to keep the mind free from all discrimination, whether between mind and objects, or between gain and loss, so that its innate purity will be restored and the awareness of the person’s inherent buddhahood achieved.⁸⁶ Wōnhyo correlates these three kinds of liberation that are preserved—which, as far as I have been able to ascertain, are unique to the *Vajrasamādhi*—with the three types of *prajñā* that contain eight liberations as outlined in the “Ten Abidings” section of *P’u-sa ying-lo pen-yeh ching*. In the *Ying-lo ching*, wisdom generated by learning (*śrutamayīprajñā*) renders unascertainable both internal and external de-

⁸² See Michel Strickmann, “On the Alchemy of T’ao Hung-chung,” p. 128.

⁸³ *Leng-ch’ieh shih-tzu chi*, T 2837.85.1289b4–5; see Chappell, “Tao-hsin,” p. 120. The citation is from *Lao-tzu*, chap. 21.

⁸⁴ *Wu-men kuan*, T 2005.48.299a29–b1.

⁸⁵ *KSGR* 1, p. 966c18–25.

⁸⁶ As *VS* points out, “Preservation is put into operation when mind and objects are non-dual.” *VS*, chap. 5, before n. 75.

ceptions; that is the first type of liberation. It corresponds to the void liberation of the *Vajrasamādhi*, for it contemplates voidness without rejecting any sign of materiality. Wisdom gained through reflection (*cintamayīprajñā*) renders unascertainable the five skandhas and all external dharmas; that is the second liberation. It correlates with the adamant liberation, for it destroys all material dharmas as if it were adamant. Wisdom gained through spiritual cultivation (*bhāvanāmayīprajñā*) reveals the voidness of materiality and, indeed, all the five skandhas in a series of six separate liberations. These all correspond to the *Vajrasamādhi*'s general designation of *prajñā*-liberation.⁸⁷

As Wōnhyo explains, if the meditator practices without learning to preserve these three types of liberation, he will remain forever attached to the mistaken views of personal identity and personal possession, which sustain the separation between mind and objects. But by maturing his cultivation of these three, he will be able to preserve his awareness of them consistently without grasping at self and others, liking and disliking. This contemplation begins at the level of the ten faiths and is perfected at the subsequent level of the ten abidings, and thus initiates the entrance onto the formal bodhisattva path.⁸⁸ It is therefore a practice appropriate to an earlier stage in spiritual development than is *shou-i*, which Wōnhyo placed subsequent to the ten abidings.

Shou-i does not exhaust the resonances found in the *Vajrasamādhi* to East Mountain/Northern school teachings. Another of the more important of these is the notion of the nonproduction of dharmas (*wu-sheng fa*; *anutpattikadharmā*). The East Mountain faction is sometimes specifically glossed as the "East Mountain's teaching of nonproduction" (Tung-shan *wu-sheng fa-men*),⁸⁹ and we have seen already in Tao-hsin's treatment of *shou-i* that he connected that style of contemplation with the principle of "nonproduction." The *Vajrasamādhi* creates an expansion in the scope of the term *ch'an* (*dhyāna*) by making "nonproduction," rather than quietude and calmness of mind, the true goal of *dhyāna*: "Know that the nature of *dhyāna* is free from both agitation and calmness and you will immediately attain the [acceptance of the] nonproduction [of dharmas] and the *prajñā* that produces nothing."⁹⁰

⁸⁷ See *P'u-sa ying-lo pen-yeh ching*, T 1485.24.1013b7–11; Wōnhyo's commentary appears at KSGR 2, pp. 987c22–988a22. Cf. Yüan-ch'eng, *Chu-chieh* 3, p. 208a.

⁸⁸ KSGR 2, p. 988a25–b2.

⁸⁹ This usage is found in the biography of Tao-shun (d. u.), one of the major disciples of Hung-jen. See *Hsü Kao-seng chuan* 8, T 2061.50.758a2–3. For a short biography of Tao-shun, see McRae, p. 39.

⁹⁰ *V/S*, chap. 3, after n. 28.

The sūtra also clarifies that nonproduction in such contexts means the “acceptance of the nonproduction of dharmas” (*anutpattikadharmakṣānti*), a Mahāyāna Buddhist technical term that, for our purposes, is the virtual equivalent of nirvāṇa.⁹¹ In this wise, the *Vajrasamādhi* freed *ch’an* from its limiting role as a noetic exercise. As *Ch’an*, it was now allowed to evolve into a comprehensive ideology and religious system, which brought within reach the crowning achievement of Mahāyāna Buddhism.

The notion of nonproduction is the common property of Mahāyāna literature, and its appearance in the *Vajrasamādhi* would not be enough in itself to clinch the East Mountain origins of that teaching. But there is an additional piece of evidence suggesting just this: the interlocutor in the “Practice of Nonproduction” chapter is the bodhisattva Mind King (Simwang/Hsinwang). This bodhisattva is the subject of an eponymous *Book of the Mind King* (*Hsin-wang ching*), which is cited in the Hung-jen text. This sūtra is listed as an apocryphal scripture in the *K’ai-yüan shih-chiao lu* and is now known only through brief citations in *Ch’an* literature.⁹² It seems to have circulated among the early *Ch’an* factions and may in fact be another of the several *Ch’an*-oriented apocrypha written during the late seventh to early eighth centuries.

A related notion in East Mountain materials is that of the nonactivation of mind (*hsin pu-ch’i*), which is associated with nonproduction in Hung-jen’s *Hsiu-hsin yao lun*: “If you guard the mind clearly, then false thoughts will not be activated. This, then, is nonproduction. . . . Once you extinguish the thought of personal possession and abandon this body, you are certain to gain nonproduction.”⁹³ This term nonactivation comes to be used in

⁹¹ This clarification appears in *VS*, chap. 3, before n. 21. *Anutpattikadharmakṣānti* is described as the principal realization gleaned at the seventh *bhūmi* of the Mahāyāna mārḡa, when the bodhisattva is certain to complete the path to buddhahood, and replaces the four noble truths as the principal content of the bodhisattva’s experience of enlightenment. Through such acquiescence or compliance, the bodhisattva is able to abandon all limiting views about the true nature of all dharmas and perceive directly their calm, quiescent quality. See Suzuki, *Studies in the Lañkāvatāra*, pp. 125–27, 226–28; and Edward Conze, *Buddhist Thought in India*, pp. 221–22.

⁹² The reference to the *Hsin-wang ching* appears in *Ch’oesangsūng-ron*, *T* 2011.48.377c1; McRae, p. 124. A *Hsin-wang p’u-sa shuo t’ou-t’o ching* (Mind-king Bodhisattva explains the *dhuta* practices) is listed as an apocryphal sūtra in *Ta-Chou lu* (*T* 2153.55 473c25) and *K’ai-yüan shih-chiao lu* 18, *T* 2154.55.677b21. There is also a Tun-huang fragment that may correspond to this same text: *Fo wei Hsin-wang p’u-sa shuo t’ou-t’o ching* (*T* 2886.85.1401c–1403b); see discussion in Mizuno, p. 44 n. 3. For citations to this sūtra in the works of Shen-hui and Tsung-mi, see McRae, p. 316 n. 62.

⁹³ *Ch’oesangsūng-ron*, *T* 2011.48.377b15–16; cf. McRae, p. 123; *Ch’oesangsūng-ron*, *T* 2011.48.378b17–18; cf. McRae, p. 128.

Northern school literature to refer to a state of mind that is beyond all conceptual dualities, such as existence and nonexistence; it is made the virtual equivalent of the "true mind," or buddha-nature. Hence, as Shen-hsiu says, "to activate the mind for the briefest instant is to go counter to the Buddha-nature, to break the Bodhisattva Precepts. . . . Always guard the true mind by not activating body and mind."⁹⁴ The idea of "extinguish the thought of personal possession," which was mentioned above in *Hsiu-hsin yao lun*, is glossed elsewhere by Hung-jen as equivalent to the vajrasamādhi,⁹⁵ indicating the alignment among nonactivation, nonproduction, and vajrasamādhi. Following Shen-hsiu's description, one may add to this list the terms buddha-nature and guarding the mind (*shou-hsin*), all themes prominent in the *Vajrasamādhi*.

Finally, the distinctive Northern school notion of "contemplation of the mind" (*kuan-hsin*) is adumbrated in chapter 3 of the *Vajrasamādhi*, which draws a virtual tautology between contemplation of mind and mental purity. This tautology is a common theme in Northern school literature, as seen in the admonition in the *Wu fang-pien* (Five expedient means) to "view the mind as pure,"⁹⁶ or Shen-hsiu's simple statement of Northern school practice: "View purity at the locus of purity."⁹⁷ Although this practice of "viewing purity" is vehemently criticized in later Ch'an literature for hypostatizing the illusory bifurcation between pure and impure,⁹⁸ the *Vajrasamādhi* tries instead to relate it to the access of principle, giving the practice a much more salutary interpretation. This accommodating attitude toward a distinctive Northern school practice is still another indication of the antiquity of the *Vajrasamādhi* in Ch'an literature, showing that it was written before the pronounced split between the Northern and "Southern" schools.

Linking the Bodhidharma and East Mountain Traditions

Both the "access of principle" and "guarding the one" share a similar foundation in Tathāgatagarbha soteriology. This orientation is clear in the *Vajrasamādhi* rendition of those teachings, as well as in the texts of the *Erh-ju ssu-hsing lun* and *Ju-tao an-hsin fa-men*. While the access of principle was intended

⁹⁴ From Shen-hsiu's *Wu fang-pien*, as translated in McRae, pp. 172, 174.

⁹⁵ *Ch'oesangsūng-ron*, T 2011 48.378c25–26; cf. McRae, p. 130.

⁹⁶ Translated in McRae, p. 172.

⁹⁷ Noted in McRae, "Ox-Head School," p. 225.

⁹⁸ See the criticism of "viewing the mind and viewing purity" in *Platform Sūtra*, sect. 14, Yampolsky, trans., p. 137.

to catalyze enlightenment through resolute faith in the truth of one's inherent buddha-nature, guarding the one sought to encourage the student to accept the overarching primacy of that buddha-nature in all of life. This commonality of concern brought out in the *Vajrasamādhi's* treatment of the access of principle and guarding the one may in turn have suggested affinities between the two factions of early Ch'an most associated with these techniques: the Bodhidharma line and the East Mountain lineage. Such associations would have been crucial in creating an unbroken line of transmission from the Buddha to the patriarchs of India and China and finally through to Ch'an masters of the first Ch'an schools.

The Ch'an tradition conceives itself as descending from an unbroken line of transmission between Indian and Chinese patriarchs, which can ultimately be traced back to the Buddha himself. For a tradition that claimed not to rely on the scriptural teachings of Buddhism, such a direct connection with the person of the Buddha—and by extension with his own experience of enlightenment—was vital to legitimate its approach. But this transmission is clearly a retrospective view of Ch'an's evolution and its stages were still quite fluid in the period with which we are concerned. The first extant account of such a transmission occurs in the funerary inscription to Fa-ju (639–689), a follower of the East Mountain teachings, where Fa-ju is listed as the successor to Bodhidharma, Hui-k'o, Seng-ts'an, Tao-hsin, and finally Hung-jen.⁹⁹ A number of variant accounts of the Ch'an lineage are extant in eighth-century transmission records, but the standard account ultimately accepted by the tradition has Ch'an evolving in the same lineal descent from Bodhidharma through to Hung-jen, at which point the succession shifts wildly depending on the sectarian affiliations of the authors. In Tao-hsüan's *Hsü kao-seng chuan* (compiled ca. 649), however, which includes the earliest biographies of several of the men who come to be recognized as the patriarchs of Ch'an, there is no evidence whatsoever linking Bodhidharma and Hui-k'o, the traditional first and second patriarchs, with Tao-hsin and Hung-jen, the fourth and fifth patriarchs. Seng-ts'an, in fact, may have been conjured up precisely to fill the gap between the second and fourth patriarchs and thus unify the bifurcation in the early Ch'an lineage.¹⁰⁰ Similarly, one of the motives behind the composition of the *Vajrasamādhi* may have been to provide scriptural support for the distinctive practices of Bodhi-

⁹⁹ For Fa-ju and his role in forging the Ch'an transmission theory, see McRae, pp. 43–44, 85–86.

¹⁰⁰ On the problematic historicity of Seng-ts'an, see McRae, pp. 30 and 280–81 n. 40.

dharma and Tao-hsin, the principal figures in the two main lineages of the nascent Ch'an tradition, and to create an implicit association between their separate lines.¹⁰¹ In fact, the Ch'an references in the *Vajrasamādhi* provide the earliest adumbration of the connections between the Bodhidharma and Tao-hsin branches, predating the explicit ties made in both Fa-ju's cenotaph and the *Ch'uan fa-pao chi* (Record of the transmission of the dharma-treasure) of 710–712.¹⁰²

The affinities between these two factions are suggested in the relationship the *Vajrasamādhi* draws in chapter 5 between the access of principle and guarding the one. After completing its account of the two accesses and the six stages of the path, the sūtra continues on to describe the problems faced by ordinary persons who wish to gain access to the *bhūtakoṭi*—the absolute, or the principle. The Buddha explains that preserving the three and guarding the one make possible such access. *Shou-i* is thus made the primary expedient applied during cultivation of the access of principle, in one sense subsuming the East Mountain teaching within the most direct of Bodhidharma's two accesses. Since the successful practitioner of *shou-i* "will complete all the *bhūmis* and attain the bodhi of the buddhas," the *Vajrasamādhi* suggests that guarding the one is the practice undertaken on the four stages of the path preceding the *bhūmis*.¹⁰³ This chapter can therefore be explicated as merging the meditative technique of *shou-i* into the larger soteriological framework of the two accesses, thus creating a comprehensive outline of Ch'an training. By forging a synthesis of the two accesses and *shou-i*, the *Vajrasamādhi*, by implication, associates the teachings of Bodhidharma with the East Mountain lineage. The structure of the *Vajrasamādhi*'s discussion of the variant Ch'an teachings, in which the two accesses precede the treatment of guarding the one, also suggests that its author was sensitive to the relative chronology of these two separate lines of transmission.

The extent to which the teachings of the Bodhidharma and East Mountain lines were presumed to differ can be gleaned from a stanza in *Hsin-hsin*

¹⁰¹ Mizuno, p. 36 et passim; Yanagida, *Shoki Zenshū shisho*, p. 27; mentioned also in Kimura, "*Kongōzammaikyō*," p. 114, and Okabe Kazuo, "Gigi kyōten," p. 362; Yampolsky ("Early Ch'an History," p. 4) also refers to the theory and accepts the Chinese origin of *VS*.

¹⁰² For the Ch'an lineage as portrayed in Fa-ju's epitaph and the *Ch'uan fa-pao chi*, see the discussion in McRae, pp. 85–88.

¹⁰³ For these passages, see *VS*, chap. 5, between nn. 70 and 77. Wōnhyo's comments were extremely helpful to me in understanding the connection between these sections; see *KSGR*, pp. 987bff.

ming (Inscription on faith in mind), a terse outline of Ch'an doctrine ascribed to the Third Patriarch, Seng-ts'an, who traditionally is affiliated with the Bodhidharma/Hui-k'o line:

The "two" exist because of the "one,"
 But also *don't guard the one* [emphasis added].
 When the one mind is not produced,
 The myriads of dharmas will be without fault.¹⁰⁴

It is doubtful that this inscription has anything to do with Seng-ts'an, one of the many black holes that populate early Ch'an history. Nevertheless, it does illustrate the type of reaction later Ch'an schools—which looked for inspiration principally to the reputed founder of the sect, Bodhidharma—had against the East Mountain/Northern school teachings. Hence, at the very least, this gnome expresses the ongoing conflict implicit in the contrary perspectives of these two early factions of Ch'an.

This connection the *Vajrasamādhi* implies between the Bodhidharma/Hui-k'o and Tao-hsin/Hung-jen lines is potentially crucial for establishing its authorship. While the *Vajrasamādhi* appears to maintain the chronological fidelity of the two factions, its attitude toward their representative practices differs rather dramatically. The sūtra's account of the two accesses is faithful to the teachings of the Bodhidharma text, in that they culminate in the realization of the *bhūtakoti*, which is "replete with all meritorious qualities."¹⁰⁵ This description, reminiscent of that given for the nonempty tathāgatagarbha, is indicative of the Tathāgatagarbha emphasis that is so common in early Ch'an. But as soon as the two accesses are introduced in the sūtra, they are immediately criticized as sustaining the dualism that drives the conditioned realm.¹⁰⁶ The bodhisattva must eventually realize that the mind has neither egress nor access and abandon the two accesses as being an unnecessary expedient. This is hardly a sympathetic account of the two accesses, given Ch'an's typically strident nondualism; indeed, the treatment foreshadows the later Ch'an antipathy toward progressive formulations of soteriological development. *Shou-i*, on the contrary, is the practice that allows di-

¹⁰⁴ *Hsin-hsin ming*, T 2010.48.376c5–6. *Hsin-hsin ming* is a work composed during the eighth century and falsely attributed to Seng-ts'an; see Chappell, "Tao-hsin," p. 103 n. 2; Nishitani Keiji and Yanagida Seizan, eds., *Zenke goroku II*, pp. 105–12. See Arthur Waley's translation in *Buddhist Texts Through the Ages*, ed. Edward Conze et al., pp. 295–98.

¹⁰⁵ *VS*, chap. 5, before n. 67.

¹⁰⁶ *VS*, chap. 5, before n. 64.

rect access to the tathāgatadhyāna, which is “the edge of reality [that] has neither egress nor access.”¹⁰⁷ It cures the “panting of the mind,” which sustains all dualities. Hence, the *Vajrasamādhi* ultimately subordinates the two accesses to *shou-i* practice. While its author may have replicated accurately the thought of the Bodhidharma text, he did not advocate its practice. And although his sūtra may suggest connections between the Tao-hsin/Hung-jen line and Bodhidharma, he is a partisan of the East Mountain teachings.

Reductionistic Tendencies in Ch'an Soteriology and Praxis

It has been seen previously how the emphasis on Tathāgatagarbha thought in early Ch'an would eventually lead to subitist forms of soteriology. But such sudden forms of soteriology almost inevitably lead in turn to a reductionistic position toward praxis, in which there can be no specific practices advocated to lead to enlightenment. If, as sinitic Tathāgatagarbha ideology claimed, all one had to do to achieve enlightenment was simply to allow one's innate enlightenment to appear, then there was nothing concrete one could do to speed that process along except perhaps to have faith in that fact. Indeed, there was a real risk that the very purposes of Buddhist meditation could be undermined by the fundamental identity drawn between real enlightenment and apparent nonenlightenment. Ch'an's use of meditative techniques that drew their inspiration and rationale from Tathāgatagarbha thought ultimately would demand that Ch'an develop a soteriological method that actually was “no-method.” Ch'an was positioning itself on the horns of a considerable dilemma: the self-styled “Meditation” school could not openly acknowledge the need for meditation.¹⁰⁸

Such conclusions are drawn from virtually the inception of the Ch'an tradition. Tao-hsin's *Ju-tao an-hsin fa-men* notes, for example,

The basis of our method [of cultivation] is no-method (*wu-fa*). From the beginning, what has been called the method is this method of no-method. This method, therefore, is not to be cultivated. This method of non-cultivation is the true and real method (*chen-shih fa*). . . . Therefore, based on this interpretation the real method is not practiced by cultivation.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁷ *VS*, chap. 5, after n. 70

¹⁰⁸ See Carl Bielefeldt's trenchant characterization of this predicament in his “The ‘Secret’ of Zen Meditation,” pp. 143–44.

¹⁰⁹ *Leng-ch'ieh shih-tzu chi*, T 2837 85 1289a26–29; translation from Chappell, “Tao-hsin,” p. 120.

The *Chüeh-kuan lun* (Treatise on the transcendence of cognition),¹¹⁰ one of the principal texts of the Niu-t'ou (Oxhead) school, a distinct school of the middle Ch'an period that traces its own lineage back to Tao-hsin,¹¹¹ contains similarly explicit dismissals of the value of meditation, as seen in the following exchange:

Question: "What should I do?" Answer: "You should do nothing."

Question: "I understand this teaching now even less than before."

Answer: "There truly is no understanding of the Dharma. Do not seek to understand it."¹¹²

The persistence of such views in Ch'an is indicated in the rejection of formal practices like sitting meditation (*tso-ch'an*) found in the *Liu-tsu t'an ching*, a middle Ch'an work some presume to have been compiled ca. 780 within the Oxhead lineage. "In this dharma-approach, all is unobstructed. 'Sitting' means that, externally, thoughts do not arise with reference to the sense-spheres. 'Meditation' means that, internally, one sees one's original nature without confusion."¹¹³

The "Practice of Nonproduction" chapter of the *Vajrasamādhi* is strikingly parallel in orientation to these early works of Ch'an. It provides arguably the earliest denunciation in Ch'an-aligned literature of the role of formal meditation practice in catalyzing enlightenment—and certainly one of the most eloquent. Complete nonattachment, the sūtra claims, is itself sufficient to generate the practice of nonproduction, but such nonattachment is not something that can be cultivated. In fact, forming the intention to cultivate will itself disturb the natural tranquillity of the mind, dulling its innate

¹¹⁰ I use the translation of the title proposed by McRae, "Ox-Head School," p. 211. For the term middle Ch'an, as referring to the period following the six traditional patriarchs but before the development of the five schools of the mature Ch'an tradition (ca. early eighth to mid-ninth centuries), see Jan Yun-hua, "Tsong-mi. His Analysis of Ch'an Buddhism," p. 4; Buswell, *Korean Approach*, p. 39; and my "K'an-hua Meditation," pp. 327–28.

¹¹¹ See the discussion of this claim in McRae, "Ox-Head School," p. 204.

¹¹² *Chüeh-kuan lun* (Pelliot no. 2074, etc.); translation from McRae, "Ox-Head School," p. 213; various recensions of the texts are reproduced, with Japanese and English translations, in Tokiwa Gishin, trans., *A Dialogue on the Contemplation-Extinguished* McRae, "Ox-Head School," pp. 206–17, demonstrates, however, that this traditional evaluation of the school is not completely correct, for the Oxhead school "was not entirely against the notion of meditative contemplation *per se*" (p. 216).

¹¹³ *Liu-tsu t'an ching*, T 2007.48.339a3–5; cf. Yampolsky, trans., *Platform Sūtra*, p. 140; and see his discussion at p. 117. For the sectarian affiliation of the text see Bielefeldt and Lancaster, "T'an Ching," *passim*; the date is noted in McRae, "Ox-Head School," p. 218.

enlightenment. Correct practice does not require the cultivation of either samādhi or sitting-meditation; rather, it is when one has abandoned all semblance of intentional activity that the dhyāna of nonproduction will be achieved. As the Buddha remarks,

“If these [consciousnesses] are already calm and extinct, the producing mind will not be produced and the mind will be constantly calm and extinct, without efficacy or function. . . . All will be calm and extinct, pure and nonabiding. *He need not access samādhi; he need not persist in sitting in dhyāna* [emphasis added]. This is nonproduction and freedom from practice.”

Simwang Bodhisattva asked, “Dhyāna can suppress all agitation and allay all illusory distractions. Why this negation of dhyāna?”

The Buddha replied, “Bodhisattva! Dhyāna in fact is agitation. Being neither agitated nor concentrated is the dhyāna that produces nothing. The nature of dhyāna is to produce nothing; it has no characteristics of the dhyāna that does produce something. The nature of dhyāna is to linger nowhere; it leaves far behind the agitation caused by trying to linger in dhyāna. Know that the nature of dhyāna is free from both agitation and calmness and you will immediately attain the [acceptance of the] nonproduction [of dharmas] and the prajñā that produces nothing. But also do not rely on, or linger over, these. Because of this knowledge, the mind also will not be agitated. For this reason, you will attain the prajñāpāramitā that produces nothing.”¹¹⁴

A similar sort of reductionism, bordering almost on antinomianism, is seen in the attitude toward the precepts found in the *Vajrasamādhi*. The *Vajrasamādhi* adopts the threefold classification of Buddhist moral codes found in Yogācāra-oriented literature, which is also followed in other sinic apocrypha: “(1) the moral code that maintains both the discipline and the deportments; (2) the moral code that accumulates wholesome dharmas; (3) the moral code that aids all sentient beings.”¹¹⁵ But it is only the ignorant

¹¹⁴ *VS*, chap. 3, after n. 28.

¹¹⁵ *VS*, chap. 6, after n. 86. Their Sanskrit equivalents are (1) *saṃvaraśīla*; (2) *kuśaladharmasaṅgrāhaka*; (3) *sattvārthakriyā*. See *Yu-ch'ieh-shih ti lun* (*Yogācārabhūmi-śāstra*) 40, *T* 1579.30.511a15, and explication at pp. 511a–c. The first type helps to calm one's mind; the second to mature one's own *buddhadharmas*; and the third to mature other sentient beings; *ibid.*, p. 523a2–4. This same division of the precepts appears in such Chinese apocryphal sūtras as *Chan-ch'a shan-o yeh-pao ching* 1 (*T* 839.17.904c7–8) and *P'u-sa ying-lo pen-yeh ching* (*T* 1485.24.1019b17). Liebenenthal (p. 365 and cf. p. 380 n. 1) gives a useful comparative listing of other relevant citations; to his listings add *Ta-sheng chuang-yen ching lun* (*Mahāyānasūtrāṅkāra-śāstra*) 8 (*T* 1604.31.630c13–14), which is the closest to the wording of *VS*; *Ta-sheng A-p'i-ta-mo tsa-chi lun* (*Abhidharmasamuccaya*) 12, *T* 1606.31.749c4–5; and cf. *Hua-yen ching* 27, *T* 279.10.149b22 and *ch.* 49, p. 258a22–23.

śramaṇa, who is evil, haughty, and distracted, who needs the precepts. The correct way to keep precepts is to realize that it is one's own discriminative thought that creates good and evil; hence, if the inherent quiescence and extinction of the mind are realized, the purpose of the precepts will automatically be fulfilled.¹¹⁶ The bodhisattva who realizes the nonproduction of dharmas, and thus the inherent purity of the mind, has no need for the help that precepts provide—but he also is free from the subtle hindrance they can create in those who observe them. The conclusion the *Vajrasamādhi* reaches about precepts is that “the nature of the moral codes is equanimous and void; [the śrāvakas] who hold fast to them are deluded and confused.”¹¹⁷ Virtually the same analysis appears in Shen-hsiu's *Wu fang-pien*, a seminal Northern school treatise: “To activate the mind for the briefest instant is to go counter to the Buddha Nature, to break the Bodhisattva Precepts.”¹¹⁸

The numerous allusions found in the *Vajrasamādhi* to the teachings of Ch'an—and especially those of the East Mountain faction—compell one to take into account such affinities in ascertaining the authorship of the text. Indeed, given the Korean provenance of the text, the possible role of a Korean adept of Ch'an in writing the scripture must now be seriously considered. What is known about the presence of Ch'an in Korea during this early period?

Early Korean Sōn and the Legend of Pōmnang

The study of early Korean Ch'an—there, known as Sōn—is hampered by a dearth of contemporary source materials. Nothing is extant from its alleged beginnings in the latter part of the seventh century. The earliest sources, all dating from the ninth century, are a few inscriptions honoring the subsequent founders of the “Nine Mountain Gates of Sōn” (Kusan Sōnmun), the Koryō appellation for this early Sōn tradition.¹¹⁹ Four of these were written

¹¹⁶ *VS*, chap. 5, after n. 82; chap. 6, after n. 86.

¹¹⁷ *VS*, chap. 5, after n. 82.

¹¹⁸ *Wu fang-pien*, trans. McRae, p. 172.

¹¹⁹ There is a burgeoning literature on the early Nine Mountains schools of Korean Sōn. A collection of several of the most important Korean articles on the formation of early Sōn has recently appeared in *Han'guk Pulgyo Sōnmun ūi hyōngsōngsa-chōk yōn'gu: Kusan Sōnmun-ül chungsim-ūro*, ed. Pulgyo hakhoe. Two eminent Korean buddhologists, Kim Yōngt'ae (“Ogyo Kusan e taehayō,” pp. 59–77) and Yi Chongik (“Han'guk Pulgyo chejongp'a sōngnip ūi yōksachōk koch'al,” pp. 29–58), have debated the era during which the schools were founded, Kim suggesting an early Koryō date, Yi supporting the traditional mid- to late-Silla time of foun-

in China by the expatriate Ch'oe Ch'iwŏn (b. 857), that paragon of sinicized Silla belles-lettres, who held important posts in the T'ang bureaucracy. These inscriptions must be used with caution, however, since they are rife with Confucian, "Taoist," and even geomantic elements, which reflect contemporary concerns more than the thought of the figures they were intended to commemorate.¹²⁰ Since they also postdate the period they are recounting by at least a century, one must tread wearily in drawing definitive conclusions based on their accounts.

However inadequate the extant sources might be for developing a precise account of the early history of Ch'an in Korea, we know that Ch'an and Korea were inextricably interwoven from virtually the inception of the tradition. Korean monks living on the mainland participated in the early saṃghas that grew up around the first teachers in the Chinese schools, at times becoming leaders themselves. One of the earliest Korean monks known to have studied Ch'an in China was a certain Yang-chou Kao-li-seng Chih-teh (Kor. Yang-chu Koryŏ-sŭng Chidŏk). Chidŏk is included in a listing of ten principal disciples of Hung-jen in the early Northern school doxography, *Leng-ch'ieh jen-fa chi* (Record of the persons and teachings of the Laṅkā[vatāra]), compiled ca. 706 by Hsüan-tse (d.u.), a fellow student of Hung-jen's. This reference, as cited in *Leng-ch'ieh shih-tzu chi*, is the only notice to Chidŏk in either Chinese or Korean sources, and nothing more is known about him.¹²¹ Given that he was said to have hailed from Yang-chou, however, he may have been a member of one of the Korean exile communities founded along the Chinese coastline from Shan-tung down to Yang-chou after the fall of Koguryŏ and Paekche. As mentioned previously, the Pao-t'ang and Ching-chung schools of early Ch'an, both centered in the

dition. Hŏ Hŭngsik ("Sŏnjong Kusan-mun kwa Sŏnmun yech'am-mun ūi munjejŏm," pp. 104, 149, and *passim*) has definitively demonstrated that the term "Kusan" is not used until the Koryŏ. Summaries of the nine schools appears in Kwŏn Sangno, "Han'guk Sŏnjong yaksa," pp. 267-74; Yŏ Hŭnsu, *T'och'ak-hwa kwajŏng esŏ pon Han'guk Pulgyo*, pp. 57-66; Minn Younggyu (Min Yŏnggyu), "Le bouddhisme Zen de Silla et de Koryŏ," pp. 48-52; and Henrik Sorensen, "The History and Doctrines of Early Korean Sŏn Buddhism." See also Buswell, *Korean Approach*, pp. 9-14 and, for further references to the schools, p. 78 n. 52; on pp. 10-11, I also include a chart of the nine schools.

¹²⁰ For Ch'oe Ch'iwŏn's four inscriptions, see Ch'oe Pyŏnghŏn, "Silla hadae Sŏnjong Kusan'p' ūi sŏngnp," pp. 265-68. As Han Kidu notes (*Silla Sŏn*, pp. 8-9), despite their inadequacy as contemporary source material, they remain the principal documents for the early history of Sŏn on the peninsula and should not be ignored out of hand.

¹²¹ For the passage from *Leng-ch'ieh jen-fa chi* that mentions Chidŏk, see Yanagida, *Shoki no Zenshi*, vol. 1, p. 298; Yanagida, *Shoki Zenshū Shisho*, pp. 33, 273; Han Kidu, *Silla Sŏn*, p. 132; Yampolsky, *Platform Sūtra*, pp. 16-17.

frontier region of Szechwan in southwestern China, claimed as their patriarch the Korean Ch'an adept Musang. Such early connections between Koreans and Ch'an made it likely that Ch'an would receive a speedy introduction to the peninsula.

The Korean tradition credits the Silla monk Pömnang (d.u.) with first introducing Ch'an from China.¹²² According to Ch'oe Ch'iwön's 893 inscription to Chisön Tohön (824–882), the founder of the Hüiyang-san school of early Korean Sön, Pömnang traveled to China sometime during the reign of Queen Söndök (r. 632–646), where he studied the Ch'an teachings under the fourth patriarch of the school, Tao-hsin. Sometime later, he returned to Korea to disseminate his new message of Ch'an. The account suggests that Pömnang, frustrated with his public mission, ultimately withdrew into retirement where finally he was able to pass his teachings on in secret to Sinhaeng (704–779). Sinhaeng's teachings were then transmitted to the otherwise unknown Chunböm (d.u.) and Hyeün (d.u.), until they finally reached Chisön Tohön, who in 879 formally founded the Hüiyang-san school—generally regarded as the oldest of the Nine Mountains schools. While the historicity of Ch'oe's account leaves much to be desired, one of its results was to make Tohön the sixth-generation successor to Tao-hsin, perhaps in imitation of the transmission of the Chinese Ch'an lineage to the Sixth Patriarch, Hui-neng.

Pömnang, unfortunately, is another of those enigmatic figures found to be so ubiquitous in the early Ch'an and Sön traditions. Ch'oe provides little evidence that he knew anything at all about Pömnang, not even such basic information as his native place or clan, let alone when he might have returned to Korea with the Ch'an teachings he had learned. And one of the themes of the account—the frustrations Pömnang is alleged to have suffered in his attempts to teach Sön—is a leitmotiv common in Ch'an hagiographical writing. The same thing is found in the narration of even Bodhidharma's career, which claims that “the words he preached were difficult to fathom and few were inspired by them.”¹²³

¹²² This information appears in the memorial inscription to Chisön Tohön (774–850), *Yu Tang Silla-kuk ko Hüiyang-san Pongam-sa kyo si Chijöng taesa Chökcho chi t'ap pimyöng*, in Yi Nünghwa, *Chosön Pulgyo t'ongsa*, vol. 1, p. 127 3–4; Chösen sötokufu, ed., *Chösen kinseki sōran*, vol. 1, pp. 90–91; and discussed in Ch'oe Pyönghön, “Silla Kusan üi söngnip,” pp. 278–79; see also Kim Yöngt'ae, “Hüiyang-san Sönp'ae üi söngnip kwa kü pöpkye e taehayö,” pp. 11–38; Buswell, *Korean Approach*, pp. 9 and 78 n. 53. The inscription was composed by Ch'oe Ch'iwön in 893, though the stele was not erected until 924; Ch'oe Pyönghön, “Silla Kusan üi söngnip,” p. 266 n. 8.

¹²³ *Hsü Kao-seng chuan* 20, T 2060 50.596c10.

Furthermore, the evidence provided by Ch'oe Ch'iwŏn to support Pŏmnang's existence and alleged career is extremely flimsy. Ch'oe attempts to corroborate Pŏmnang's tutelage under Tao-hsin by citing the following passage in Tu Cheng-lun's (574–ca. 658) cenotaph for Tao-hsin:

According to the inscription composed by Palace Secretary (*chung-shu*) Tu Cheng-lun: "An extraordinary gentleman from a distant land, an eminent man from a foreign region, did not shrink from the dangerous trip and came to this auspicious spot. He took hold of the jewel [of Tao-hsin's teachings] and took refuge in it." Who was this if not the master [Pŏmnang]? But those who know do not talk about it. And furthermore, he hid in secret.¹²⁴

This passage quite obviously says nothing about the nationality of this "extraordinary gentleman," let alone that he was Pŏmnang. Ch'oe here is trying to establish the pedigree of the indigenous Korean Sŏn tradition by connecting it with the eminent fourth patriarch of Chinese Ch'an. Similar retrospective connections were made as well by the Oxhead school of middle Ch'an, which sought to establish its own credentials by associating its founder, Fa-jung (594–657), with Tao-hsin. An even more obvious example of such an attempt at legitimacy is the case of the earliest Vietnamese school of Ch'an, which claims descent from Seng-ts'an—who did not exist.¹²⁵ Hence, Tu's reference in itself offers the flimsiest of support for the traditional claim that Pŏmnang trained in the East Mountain school under Tao-hsin.

Ch'oe may have made his startling claim about Pŏmnang's identity to authenticate Sinhaeng's lineage, one account of which is found in Sinhaeng's memorial stele, *Haedong ko Sinhaeng sŏnsa chi pi* (Cenotaph to the past Sŏn master Sinhaeng of Korea), written in 813 by Kim Hŏnjŏng (d.u.).¹²⁶ In this stele, which provides the earliest extant account of Sŏn history, Sinhaeng is said to have first trained for two years under the Vinaya master Unjŏng

¹²⁴ Yi Nŭnghwa, *T'ongsa*, vol. 1, p. 127 l. 4–5; *Chŏsen kinseki sŏran*, vol. 1, pp. 90–91. Tu Cheng-lun's inscription for Tao-hsin is no longer extant, but it is quoted in Ching-chŭeh's *Leng-ch'ieh shih-tzu chi*, as well as in *Ch'uan fa-pao chi* (see translation in McRae, p. 263). Yanagida (*Shoki Zenshū shisho*, pp. 83–84) has suggested that the inscription is falsely ascribed to Tu and actually dates from the early eighth century.

¹²⁵ See Thich Thien-an, *Buddhism and Zen in Vietnam*, pp. 32–33.

¹²⁶ Chŏsen sŏtokufu, ed., *Chŏsen kinseki sŏran*, vol. 1, pp. 113–16. Ch'oe Ch'iwŏn's inscription to Tohŏn uses a different character to transcribe the first syllable of Sinhaeng's name, however, suggesting that his account may have been based on oral tradition, not on his reading of Sinhaeng's stele.

(d.u.) before departing to Mount Hogö, where Pömnang was then dwelling in retirement. There, after an intensive period of training, Pömnang “transmitted the lamp of prajñā” to Sinhaeng, sanctioning Sinhaeng as his successor. Sinhaeng subsequently meditated in the wilderness for three years before also undertaking the incumbent pilgrimage to China sometime during the reign of the T’ang emperor Su-tsung (756–762). Making his way to the T’ang capitals of Lo-yang and Ch’ang-an, Sinhaeng trained under Ta-chao Chih-k’ung (703–779), a disciple of P’u-chi (651–739), the Second Patriarch of the Northern Ch’an school. Sinhaeng’s own teachings are thus claimed to have combined Pömnang’s instructions, which ultimately derived from the Fourth Patriarch’s East Mountain faction, with those of the Northern school.¹²⁷

Over the following century, Sön training centers were established on eight other mountain sites.¹²⁸ Fully seven of these were founded by Korean successors in the Hung-chou school of the middle Ch’an period, which would eventually evolve into the Lin-chi school of classical Ch’an. The last school to develop, the Sumi-san school, was founded by a teacher in the lineage of Ch’ing-yüan Hsing-ssu (d. 740) that eventually matured into the Ts’ao-tung school. It was these sites that would become known as the Nine Mountains school of Korean Sön. As convenient as the term Nine Mountains is, it is a real misnomer considering the richness of the Sön tradition at this time, which was certainly more widespread than this rubric would suggest.

All of these early Sön schools were founded on the periphery of the Silla kingdom, far from the capital of Kyöngju, and several of their founders came from important regional families. Most support for these schools also came from the local gentry. As just one of many such examples, the Sumi-san school was sponsored by Wang Kŏn (r. 918–943), the eventual founder of the Koryŏ dynasty, at what would become the new capital of Kaesŏng. Repeated power struggles during the eighth and early ninth centuries had seriously emasculated the power of the central government in Kyöngju. By the middle of the ninth century, these political intrigues had so weakened the court that regional power centers emerged with growing economic

¹²⁷ Min Yönggyu has sought to use this evidence to prove that Nine Mountains Sön was based on the Northern, not the “Southern” school, a vast overstatement of Northern Ch’an influence in Korea. See his “Iryön ūi Sön Pulgyo,” pp. 2–9.

¹²⁸ From the extant Korean sources, the next Sön adept known to have entered China after Sinhaeng was Toüi (d. 825), founder of the Kaji-san lineage, who traveled there in 784, some five decades later; see Buswell, *Korean Approach*, pp. 12–13.

strength. Garrisons stationed on the frontiers to guard the kingdom teamed with the local magnates to bring strong military power as well to these regional centers. It was during this decline of Silla, leading up to the reunification of the Korean peninsula under the Koryŏ banner in 936, that Sŏn developed.

The presence of Sŏn on the periphery of the Silla kingdom suggests the "frontier quality" of the Nine Mountains schools. To extend their religious influence wider would require competing with the Hwaŏm school, long entrenched at the seat of government in Kyŏngju. Despite the political disarray in the capital, the Hwaŏm school remained a potent force, providing continued ideological support to the centralized Silla autocracy and the nobility. Indeed, the writings of early Nine Mountains figures, such as Toŭi (d. 825) and Muyŏm (799–888), testify to the ideological battles fought between Sŏn advocates and Hwaŏm exegetes.¹²⁹ This placed Sŏn—and in turn the local gentry that supported it—in direct opposition to the old aristocracy in Kyŏngju.¹³⁰ One finds in the story of Taean's editing of the *Vajrasamādhi* a similar challenge to the authority of the court.

Lacking any contemporary information about the earliest Korean advocate of Sŏn—the man we know as Pŏmnang—one may tentatively attempt to deduce something about the nature of his teachings from examining what the tradition has to say about his eventual successor, Chisŏn Tohŏn.¹³¹ I referred above to the variety of texts that are quoted in the Tao-hsin section of *Leng-ch'ieh shih-tzu chi*; presumably Tao-hsin's students would have been steeped in the same knowledge of doctrinal materials that influenced their teacher's own approach to practice. Now, the Hŭiyang-san school—which claims to be derivative of Tao-hsin—is considered to have been the most syncretic of all the Nine Mountains schools. Chisŏn, its founder, is said to have gone so far as to advocate a fusion of the three teachings of Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism.¹³² This propensity tallies well with the eclectic-

¹²⁹ See *ibid.*, pp. 12–14, for examples of these confrontations.

¹³⁰ Ki-Baik Lee's *A New History of Korea*, pp. 94–107, provides a convenient summary of the political background to the rise of Sŏn.

¹³¹ The lineage is discussed in Han Kidu, *Silla Sŏn*, pp. 77–81; a chart of the lineage is given on p. 81. Pŏmnang's line later became associated with the Northern school of Ch'an via his disciple Sinhaeng (d. 779); see discussion in Buswell, *Korean Approach*, p. 9.

¹³² His stele inscription states, for example, that "the mind amalgamates the tripartite teachings"; see discussion in Han Kidu, *Sŏn sasang*, pp. 78–79. Note, however, Ch'oe Pyŏnghŏn's comments ("Silla hadae Sŏnjong Kusanp'a ŭi sŏngnip," pp. 265–68), for possible qualifications to this statement.

cism noted previously for both Tao-hsin and the *Vajrasamādhi*, and perhaps of the earliest adepts of Sōn in Korea.

In his treatment of the Nine Mountains schools, Han Kidu provides another significant clue as to the character of the Hūiyang-san teachings. Han proposes that the nine sites be divided into two major branches: the Puk-san, or “Northern Mountain,” group and the Nam-ak, or “Southern Marchmount,” faction. The members of the northern group, comprising the Kaji-san, Sagul-san, Saja-san, and Sōngju-san schools, were more conservative in their approaches to Sōn, adhering closely to the teachings received from their Chinese masters in the Hung-chou line. The southern faction, which included the Hūiyang-san, Pongnim-san, Tongni-san, and Sumi-san schools, was rather more eclectic in orientation, showing a willingness to adapt the teachings received on the mainland to indigenous Korean concerns. The Hūiyang-san school, which is representative of this branch, is said to have tried to synthesize variant approaches to the Buddhist teachings into a comprehensive, syncretic system of Sōn practice. This Nam-ak faction Han regards as having been most heavily influenced by the teachings of the Northern school of early Ch’an, which had its origins in the East Mountain lineage. Han believes that the Nam-ak approach, with its characteristic eclecticism, would become the mainstream of Korean Sōn, culminating in the explicitly syncretic teachings of the later Koryō Sōn monk Chinul (1158–1210).¹³³ While one may quibble with Han over the precise division of the Nine Mountains schools, his bifurcation is valuable heuristically for detailing the wider orientations of the early Sōn schools of Silla. And these orientations will help determine the possible motivations behind the composition of the *Vajrasamādhi*.

The Authorship Problem

The *Vajrasamādhi* appears in Korea sometime during the last quarter of the seventh century, and probably within a few years of Wōnhyo’s death in 686. As I mentioned in chapter 1, and will detail in the annotation to my translation of the *Vajrasamādhi*, there are a number of passages in the text that either resonate with or show the direct influence of a number of important Mahāyāna texts, both authentic, translated sūtras and suspected sinic apocryphal compositions.¹³⁴ For the *Vajrasamādhi* to have been composed in Ko-

¹³³ See the discussion in Han Kidu, *Silla Sōn*, pp. 128–38.

¹³⁴ For references to these textual sources see Mizuno, pp. 41–46; Liebenenthal, pp. 361–77; Kimura, “*Kongōzammaikyō*,” pp. 109–14.

rea around 686, it is necessary to show at the very least that these scriptures were available then on the peninsula, and preferably that they enjoyed the attention of contemporary Silla writers. Table 4.2 shows that not only were all of these texts in circulation in Korea by the middle of the seventh century, but Wŏnhyo himself had either written specific commentaries on most of these scriptures or at least quoted them in his writings.¹³⁵ Hence, the evidence gleaned through such textual influences on the *Vajrasamādhi* also does not conflict with its apparent Korean origin. Corroboration of these close connections between Silla and China is also offered by art historians. Jonathan Best has shown, for example, that by the last quarter of the seventh century there was no longer any time lag in the introduction of Buddhist artistic motifs from China into Silla. Hence, a Silla Buddhist in the 680s would have had access to Buddhist literary and artistic materials virtually simultaneous with their creation on the Chinese mainland.¹³⁶

TABLE 4 2
Scriptures and Treatises Figuring as a Basis for the *Vajrasamādhi-Sūtra*

<i>Text</i>	<i>Taishō No.</i>	<i>Wŏnhyo's Writings on the Text</i>
<i>Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-sūtra</i>	T 262	3 works (#4,5,6,7)
<i>Mahāparinirvāna-sūtra</i>	T 374	2 works (#21, 22)
<i>Avataṃsaka-sūtra</i>	T 278	4 works (#9,10,11,12)
<i>Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra</i>	T 671	3 works (#30,21,32)
<i>Mūlamadhyamakakārikā</i>	T 1564	1 work (#51), and 4 others on Madhyamaka school (#47,48,49,50)
<i>Hṛdaya-sūtra</i>	T 251	1 work (#3)
<i>Suvikrāntavikrāmaparipṛcchā</i>	T 231	none; two other works on Prajñāpāramitā (#1,2)
<i>P'u-sa ying-lo pen-yeh ching</i>	T 1485	1 work (#41)
<i>Suvarṇaprabhāsottama-sūtra</i>	T 664	1 work (#29)
<i>Ta-sheng ch'i-hsin lun</i>	T 1666	8 works (#68,69,70,71,72,73,74,75)
<i>Mahāyānasamgraha</i>	T 1593	3 works (#57,58,59)
<i>Jen-wang ching</i>	T 245	quoted 27 times in various works
<i>Mahāyānasūtrāṅkāra</i>	T 1604	quoted 1 time
<i>Dāsabhūmika-sūtra</i>	T 287	quoted 4 times
<i>Daśabhūmikasūtrapadēsa</i>	T 1522	quoted 5 times

¹³⁵ The serial numbers for Wŏnhyo's works in table 4.2 are drawn from Tongguk taehak-kyo pulgyo munhwa yŏn'guso, ed., *Han'guk pulgyo ch'ansul munhŏn ch'ongnok*, pp. 16–37; references to quotations in Wŏnhyo's commentaries are from the chart in Rhi Ki-yong, "Kyŏng-jŏn," pp. 220–23.

¹³⁶ Jonathan Best, "Buddhism, Art and the Transforming Power of Faith in Early Korea."

But does the obviously close connection between Wŏnhyo and the *Vajrasamādhī* implicate him in the composition of the sūtra? I think not. Tsanning's statements that the Dragon King had specifically commanded that the text be commented upon by Wŏnhyo say nothing about any role played by Wŏnhyo personally in its compilation. Rather, it is only an indication of the extent of Wŏnhyo's fame at the time—that is to say, Wŏnhyo's knowledge and intellectual acumen were so renowned that he would have been singled out by the Dragon King for this special office. Taean, certainly, is directly implicated, but nothing is known about this phantom apart from this single reference in Wŏnhyo's hagiographies. Whoever the writer of the *Vajrasamādhī* was, the text was of such design that its importance would be readily apparent to Wŏnhyo. By gaining the patronage of this preeminent Silla scholiast and his coterie, the text would immediately have been accorded a measure of prestige and legitimacy. The author thus ensured that the *Vajrasamādhī*—with its surreptitious Sŏn message—would be brought into the mainstream of the Korean Buddhist tradition as a whole, where its overriding syncretic focus would help vivify subsequent doctrinal development within the tradition.

It is clear from the remarks in his commentary that Wŏnhyo himself accepted without reservation the authenticity of the sūtra; indeed, nowhere does he even broach any possibility to the contrary. As discussed in the previous chapter, Wŏnhyo saw in the *Vajrasamādhī* the canonical basis of both the twofold gnoseological schema outlined in the *Awakening of Faith* and Paramārtha's theory of the amalavijñāna. The parallels Wŏnhyo drew between the *Vajrasamādhī* and other texts that had been so central to the development of his own thought excited him so much that he voluntarily quit his retirement to return to writing and lecturing. Nevertheless, there is no intimation from Wŏnhyo's treatment of, or attitude toward, the text that he was in any way involved in its composition. The clinching piece of evidence, however, is that Wŏnhyo, who was unable to complete either of his two attempted pilgrimages to China, could not have known of the pedigree of the Ch'an passages that appear in the sūtra.

But what of the possibility that Wŏnhyo may have written the *Vajrasamādhī* to further his own syncretic vision, while incorporating unwittingly fragments of originally Ch'an materials that somehow had made their way to Korea? We know, after all, that there was a ready exchange of texts between the peninsula and the mainland throughout Buddhism's history in East Asia. Treating Wŏnhyo as author would have been my alternative ending. While this scenario cannot be dismissed out of hand, the structure of

the Ch'an sections in chapter 5 of the scripture belie it. There, the author gives a chronologically accurate presentation of the historical evolution of Ch'an thought, beginning with the two accesses of the Bodhidharma text and continuing on to the East Mountain doctrine of guarding the one. The odds that Wŏnhyo, who was completely oblivious to the Ch'an or Sŏn movements, could have been so uncannily precise in his chronology are slim at best. But what is more striking in this account is its polemical bent: the structure of the argument supports the teachings of the East Mountain school over those of the Bodhidharma lineage. What possible motive could Wŏnhyo have had for such apologetics when he knew nothing about the evolving Ch'an tradition?

But might Wŏnhyo not have learned about Ch'an from an early missionary, perhaps someone like Pŏmnang? This is pure speculation. There is no evidence from any source that Wŏnhyo had contacts with early Sŏn teachers, and no identification of Wŏnhyo with the Sŏn schools in later hagiographical records. Sŏn was the predominant school of Buddhism at the time that *Samguk yusa*, the main anthology concerning Three Kingdoms religion, was written, and there would have been distinct advantages to identifying Koryŏ Sŏn with Wŏnhyo—if such a claim were in any way tenable. The fact that no such identification is made suggests that the Koreans had no retained memory of Wŏnhyo's involvement with Sŏn. As enticing as the prospect may seem, Wŏnhyo is not our man.

The only other authorship possibility would be that the *Vajrasamādhi* was written in China and then introduced into Korea virtually simultaneous with its composition. There is no evidence, however, that the sūtra circulated in China until 730, when it was finally relisted in the *K'ai-yüan lu*. I have also mentioned that there were several related Ch'an-orientated apocrypha written in China between the late sixth and early eighth centuries, at around the same time as the *Vajrasamādhi*. These included such texts as the *Fa-wang ching*, *Hsin-wang ching*, and *Ch'an-men ching*, as well as some unnamed indigenous sūtras now known only in citations. These scriptures are also associated with the East Mountain/Northern school lineage and are cited in Ch'an anthologies, such as *Leng-ch'ieh shih-tzu chi*. If the *Vajrasamādhi* were composed in China, it would have been composed in the same religious milieu that spawned these other Ch'an apocrypha. But it had also to have been finished no later than 686, the year of Wŏnhyo's death, and probably a year or so earlier to give it time to make it to Korea; it therefore antedates these related texts, most of which are dated ca. 695–730. Why, then, is the *Vajrasamādhi* never cited in any Chinese sources associated with

the East Mountain/Northern school line, such as the *Leng-ch'ieh shih-tzu chi*, which was written ca. 713–720? Diehard sinophiles might suggest that the nucleus of the sūtra was composed in China, the complete sūtra being redacted later in Korea. But this conjecture is completely hypothetical and, given the present state of our knowledge, utterly unfounded. While it is not categorically impossible that the *Vajrasamādhi* was composed on the Chinese mainland and then introduced to the Korean peninsula, there is absolutely no evidence even hinting at such a possibility. Sinocentrists could finally suggest the *Vajrasamādhi* was written by a Chinese Ch'an missionary working in Korea—again a prospect for which there is not a shred of evidence. But even in that most speculative of cases the *Vajrasamādhi* would have been written in Korea, for a Korean audience, and would have to qualify as a Korean sūtra.

But if Wōnhyo, or a Chinese, was not the author of the scripture, then who was? To be able to write the *Vajrasamādhi*, any candidate would, first, have had to be conversant with the principal texts of the Sinitic Tathāgata-garbha tradition, especially the *Awakening of Faith* and the *Lankāvatāra-sūtra*. He also had to be familiar with the incipient Ch'an doctrines on the Chinese mainland and, more specifically, with the teachings of the East Mountain faction. And finally, he had to have been Korean. The dearth of historical sources from the Silla period makes it problematic to determine authorship directly. But it is here that the Ch'an elements in the *Vajrasamādhi* loom large. What can be said of the possibilities that an early Korean Sōn adept may have written the *Vajrasamādhi*?

Given what is known of the traditional accounts of the evolution of Korean Sōn, the obvious candidate for authorship of the *Vajrasamādhi* would be Pōmnang. Of the figures about whom we have any knowledge, only Pōmnang is directly associated with Tao-hsin, the Ch'an master whose teachings appear so conspicuously in the *Vajrasamādhi*, and thus would have had the requisite knowledge of the East Mountain teachings necessary to write the sūtra. If Pōmnang's own scholastic background were anything like that ascribed to Tao-hsin, he would also have had sufficient doctrinal understanding to contextualize those Ch'an teachings within the Tathāgata-garbha framework employed in the *Vajrasamādhi*. And Pōmnang was a Korean. He is also claimed to have begun proselytizing in Korea right around the time I have dated the *Vajrasamādhi*. While the date of Pōmnang's repatriation is not given in the inscriptions, it is doubtful that he could have returned to Korea until sometime after 676. This is because travel across national boundaries would have been virtually impossible until after the consolidation of the Silla

victory in the three-kingdoms unification wars, as was noted in Wŏnhyo's case as well. One can see how nicely this scenario of Pŏmnang as author converges with the provenance, dating, and religious milieu already established for the *Vajrasamādhi*.

One could also provide a viable motivation for Pŏmnang to have written the scripture. By the last quarter of the seventh century, Sŏn—and specifically the Sŏn of Tao-hsin's lineage, which was still looking for legitimacy on the Chinese mainland—may have been making its first inroads in Korea. As some of the inscriptions note, however, Korean Sŏn seems not to have been particularly successful in the early years of its tenure on the peninsula, the major attention of Silla Buddhists being on the scholastic schools. Toüi's (d. 825) cenotaph states, for example: "People of his time only revered the teachings of the scriptures and cultivated contemplation methods that maintained the spirit (*chonsin*); they could not understand the unconditioned school [of Sŏn], which is free in all situations."¹³⁷ Pŏmnang himself was said to have "hid in secret" rather than continue trying to disseminate publicly his new teachings.¹³⁸ It is in this connection that the statement appearing in the *Sung Kao-seng chuan* biography of Wŏnhyo of Taean's refusal "to cross the threshold of the royal palace" is worth recalling. As I have noted, the Sŏn teachers of the Unified Silla period transmitted their teachings in virtual isolation from the centers of ecclesiastical power in the Silla capital of Kyŏngju. The antipathy Taean displays toward the royal palace—and, by extension, toward the scholastic schools that the court supported—may imply the antiestablishment (perhaps Sŏn?) affiliations of the person most closely associated with the "rediscovery" of the text. Given the antagonistic climate of the times, it is thus easy to imagine that someone like Pŏmnang could have composed a text—the *Vajrasamādhi*—that implicitly connected Tao-hsin's teachings with those of the legendary Ch'an patriarch, Bodhidharma, finally couching these Sŏn messages in a sūtra that incorporated not only allusions to many of the major trends in East Asian Mahāyāna philosophy but also to that doctrinal element so vital to Silla Buddhist scholasticism: the synthetic Tathāgatagarbha theory of the *Awakening of Faith*. Titled after a type of samādhi that was the focus of widespread attention in sinic Buddhist scholasticism, the new sūtra could thus be portrayed as the reappear-

¹³⁷ *Silla-kuk Muju Kaji-san Porim-sa si Pojo sŏnso yŏngt'ap pimyŏng*, by Kim Wŏn (d.u.); in Yi Nŏnghwa, *Chosŏn t'ongsa*, vol. 1, pp. 120.13–121.1; *Chŏsen kinseki sŏran*, vol. 1, p. 62.8–9; quoted in Buswell, *Korean Approach*, p. 78 n. 55.

¹³⁸ *Chijŏng taesa chi t'ap pimyŏng*, in Yi Nŏnghwa, *Chosŏn Pulgyo t'ongsa*, vol. 1, p. 127 l. 5.

ance of a text long out of circulation, thanks to the happy coincidence that a long-lost *Vajrasamādhi-sūtra* continued to be listed in Buddhist bibliographical catalogues. Such a text would have been sure to attract the immediate attention of influential scholiasts like Wŏnhyo, thereby ensuring that its underlying Sŏn message would be popularized, perhaps to an extent that this early Sŏn adept himself could never have hoped.

One must remember, however, that any connections of the Pŏmnang mentioned in ninth-century inscriptions with either Tao-hsin or the historical Nine Mountains schools are extremely tenuous. Even the associations drawn between Pŏmnang and Sinhaeng, his presumed successor, are questionable, given the pronounced differences in their dates. Since Sinhaeng was not born until 704, while Pŏmnang studied under Tao-hsin ca. 632–646, their student-master relationship is difficult to support chronologically. If Pŏmnang studied under Tao-hsin as an adult, he would have to have been born at the very latest in the 620s. Since Sinhaeng had studied with a Vinaya master for two years before meeting Pŏmnang, and thus was probably at least twenty, he could not have met Pŏmnang before perhaps 723. This would make Pŏmnang about a hundred years old when he first met Sinhaeng—not impossible, but highly improbable. This discrepancy has led Kwŏn Sangno to suggest that the Pŏmnang who studied with Tao-hsin could not be the same person who transmitted the Sŏn teachings to Sinhaeng.¹³⁹ Any identity we might thus claim between Pŏmnang and the author of the *Vajrasamādhi* is, finally, speculative.

Nevertheless, whoever the author may have been, he was familiar with the literature of the two major factions of the nascent Ch'an tradition, was sympathetic to the East Mountain school and specifically with the teachings most closely associated with Tao-hsin, not Hung-jen, and possessed a working knowledge of sinic Tathāgatagarbha thought. These characteristics tally more closely with the attributes of the Pŏmnang of the inscriptions than with any other contemporary person I know of in Korea. Only Pŏmnang had the necessary background to write the text and the compelling motive for resorting to scriptural forgery. If the *Vajrasamādhi* were not written by Pŏmnang himself, then it must have been written by someone very much like him.

The three other names available by which one might refer to the author of the *Vajrasamādhi* are all more problematic than is Pŏmnang. Taean is strongly implicated in the “rediscovery” of the sūtra, but he is not associated

¹³⁹ Kwŏn Sangno, “Han’guk Sŏnjong yaksa,” p. 266

with Sŏn, and no claim is made that he ever traveled to China, where he could have learned of the Ch'an teachings of Tao-hsin. Chidŏk, the Korean monk named in Northern school records as a disciple of Hung-jen, is the only other Silla monk besides Pŏmnang who is presumed to have trained under East Mountain teachers and, thus, the only other Korean exposed to the doctrines so central to the *Vajrasamādhi*. Had Chidŏk returned to Korea he might have made a plausible candidate. There is no such evidence, however. Chidŏk is not even mentioned in passing in indigenous Sŏn materials and seems to have remained unknown in his native land. Sinhaeng might also have been a viable choice if his pilgrimage to China had taken place some forty years earlier than the middle of the eighth century. The depiction of Pŏmnang therefore tallies best with the characteristics of the person who could have authored the *Vajrasamādhi*. In the absence of any definitive evidence to the contrary, the author may be called "Pŏmnang," provided, of course, that one understands by this name not the paleographic Pŏmnang but instead a historical shell used to designate the person with the requisite background to compose the *Vajrasamādhi*. While perhaps not the completely satisfying conclusion one might like to this story, more than anyone else it is Pŏmnang who deserves the prize of authorship.

The Legacy of the *Vajrasamādhi*

Soon after its composition, the *Vajrasamādhi* began to be used frequently in the writings of East Asian Buddhists of varying sectarian persuasions. Perhaps the earliest Chinese treatise to cite the *Vajrasamādhi* (anonymously, as is common in Chinese works) is *Hua-yen ching i-hai po-men* (A hundred approaches to the sea of meaning of the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra*) by the Hua-yen systematizer, Fa-tsang.¹⁴⁰ While the date of this treatise is unknown, it was probably written sometime during the early years of the eighth century.¹⁴¹ Fa-tsang is well known to have been profoundly influenced by Wŏnhyo and had near immediate access through his Korean contacts to a number of Wŏnhyo's compositions; hence it is quite possible that Fa-tsang received the *Vajrasamādhi* from Korea, perhaps even learning of the *sūtra* through Wŏnhyo's commentary. Another early source in which the *Vajrasamādhi* appears

¹⁴⁰ *Hua-yen ching i-hai po-men*, T 1875.45.628c21–22 = VS, p. 371c13–14.

¹⁴¹ See Yoshizu Yoshihide, "Hōzō-den no kenkyū," pp. 168–93, for the most recent study of Fa-tsang's life and works

is the *Sōk Mahayōn-ron*, an apocryphal composition to the *Awakening of Faith*, which was composed probably in Korea in the middle of the eighth century. The *Vajrasamādhi* is said to be one of the ten major scriptures upon which that treatise is based; and indeed the sūtra's pervasive impact on that text lends credence to theories of the Korean origin of both of those compositions.¹⁴²

But it is in works with explicit Ch'an affiliations that the most extensive use of the *Vajrasamādhi* is made. It is cited extensively, for example, in the *Li-tai fa-pao chi*,¹⁴³ a doxographic collection on the early Ch'an patriarchs, compiled ca. 774–781 in the Pao-t'ang school.¹⁴⁴ Provocatively, the *Vajrasamādhi* is quoted by title in the section of that record devoted to the Korean Ch'an adept Musang. While there is little chance that the *Li-tai fa-pao chi* can be accepted as a verbatim record of Musang's teachings, the fact that the *Vajrasamādhi* was assumed to have been known by him is suggestive of the Ch'an—and specifically the Korean Sōn—affinities of the sūtra. It was probably under Pao-t'ang auspices that the *Vajrasamādhi* became known in Tibet: the sūtra was translated into Tibetan by at least the end of the eighth century, as is attested by its citation in works attributed to Vimalamitra, one of the founders of the Rñiñ-ma school.¹⁴⁵ The *Vajrasamādhi* is also quoted in an anthology of Tun-huang Ch'an materials, which has been given the title *Shokyō yōshō* (Essentials of the sūtras), the contents of which are closely associated with the *Li-tai fa-pao chi*.¹⁴⁶ That compilation is dated sometime after 716—the date of Śubhakarasiṃha's (d. 735) arrival in China, an account of which appears in the text—but is more plausibly dated, I believe, to within a few years of the *Li-tai fa-pao chi*.¹⁴⁷ This appeal of the *Vajrasamādhi* to a predominantly Ch'an audience is indicated as well by the fact that, in later materials, it continues to be cited primarily in Ch'an works, such as those by Yen-shou (904–975), or in Hua-yen treatises by doctrinal exegetes

¹⁴² The *VS* is quoted by title in *Sōk Mahayōn-ron* at *T* 1668 32.593c12, 603b3–5, 606a8–17, 611c23–27, 630a15–17, and *passim*.

¹⁴³ *Li-tai fa-pao chi*, *T* 2075.51.189b2 = *VS*, p. 369a23–24; *VS* is also cited at *T* 2075.51.189a6. For the importance of apocryphal sūtras in the *Li-tai fa-pao chi* and the Pao-t'ang school, see Jeffrey Broughton, "Early Ch'an Schools in Tibet," p. 57 n. 36.

¹⁴⁴ See Yanagida, *Shōki zenshū shisho*, pp. 223, 279, for discussion of this important text.

¹⁴⁵ See the discussion by Luis O. Gómez ("Indian Materials on the Doctrine of Sudden Enlightenment," pp. 430–32 n. 21) concerning the authenticity of this section in Vimalamitra's work where the passage from *VS* is quoted. As Gómez notes (p. 395), apocryphal scriptures, including *VS*, were used by the Chinese debaters at the Tibetan Council of Lhasa to support their radical positions.

¹⁴⁶ Yanagida, "*Li-tai fa-pao chi*," p. 37.

¹⁴⁷ I accept Mizuno Kōgen's dating given in "Gisaku no *Hokkukyō* ni tsuite," p. 20.

strongly influenced by Ch'an, such as Ch'eng-kuan (738–840) and Tsung-mi (780–841).¹⁴⁸ Indeed, the continued appeal of the *Vajrasamādhi* to a Ch'an audience is perhaps unsurprising, given that we now know it was written by a Sōn sympathizer with covert polemical motives.

It is significant, however, that all such citations of the *Vajrasamādhi* date at least two decades after Wōnhyo had already commented on the text. Some previous scholars have been led astray by a few cases where a *Chin-kang san-mei ching* is cited in pre-eighth-century texts—such as in Tao-hsüan's *Shih-men kui-ching i* (661) or Tao-shih's (d. 683) *Fa-yüan chu-lin* (668). These, however, all prove instead to be quotations from *Chin-kang san-mei pen-hsing ch'ing-ching pu-huai pu-mieh ching* (Sūtra on the original nature of the vajrasamādhi being pure, indefeasible, and nondeteriorating), a completely different sūtra, which the catalogues presume to have been translated sometime during the three Ch'in dynasties (350–431).¹⁴⁹ Hence, citations of the *Vajrasamādhi* in East Asian literature provide final testimony to the scenario about the Korean origin of the text.

The Place of the *Vajrasamādhi* in the Evolution of Ch'an

Despite Ch'an's claim of being a unique branch of Buddhism utterly divorced from the rest of the tradition, the evidence marshalled in this study clearly belies it. However vigorous its subsequent protestations to the contrary, Ch'an evolved out of the same trends in Buddhist thought and practice that forged other sinic schools of Buddhism, such as T'ien-t'ai and Hua-

¹⁴⁸ Extensive listings of citations from *VS* appearing in Ch'an works are given in Mizuno, "Gisaku no *Hokkukyō*," passim. These include Tsung-mi's *Yüan-chüeh ching lüeh-shu chu* (*T* 1795; four quotes) and *Ch'an-yüan chu-chüan-chi tou-hsü* (*T* 2015.48.405b = *VS*, p. 368a); and Yen-shou's *Tsung-ching lu* (*T* 2016, thirty quotes) and *Wan-shan t'ung-kuei chu* (*T* 2017; five quotes). *VS* citations in other Ch'an texts are also given in Chu-chen, *T'ung-tsung chi* 1, p. 228c11–16.

¹⁴⁹ *Fa-yüan chu-lin*, for example, cites a *Chin-kang san-mei ching* at *T* 2122.53.431a28–b1; but this is instead a citation from *Chin-kang san-mei pen-hsing ch'ing-ching pu-huai pu-mieh ching*, *T* 644.15.699a18–21, 25. Yanagida's claim (*Shōki Zenshū shisho*, p. 30 n. 13) that this quotation does not appear in either of the two *Vajrasamādhi-sūtras* is incorrect, belying his suspicion that there were variant recensions of *VS*, which were finally standardized into the text as it is known today. This same passage is cited by Tao-hsüan in his *Shih-men kui-ching i 2* (*T* 1896 45.868a29–b3) and attributed to *VS*; he, however, has probably taken the quotation from *Fa-yüan chu-lin*. Thus it certainly does not come from a *Chin-kang shang-wei ching*, presumed translated by Buddhaśānta ca. 520–539, which is cited in Tao-hsüan's *Hsu Kao-seng chuan* 1 (*T* 2060.50.429a11), as Yanagida (*Shōki Zenshū shisho*, p. 30 n. 13) and Kimura ("Kongōzammaikyō," p. 117 n. 39) had presumed.

yen. Ch'an thought is closely allied with texts that prompted the emphasis in Chinese Buddhism on the immanence of enlightenment and subitism, such as the *Lañkāvatāra* and the *Awakening of Faith*. The syncretic orientation of those two texts—particularly their harmonization of the variant philosophies of mind represented by the ālaya and amala vijñānas through recourse to the tathāgatagarbha concept—is seen also in the *Vajrasamādhi*. This book has shown that Ch'an, too, was inspired by similar philosophical concerns and must be placed squarely within the doctrinal matrix of the broader sinitic Buddhist tradition. Ch'an is a radical reading of the Tathāgatagarbha ideal, intended to bring out explicitly its soteriological connotations. Ch'an as presented in this sūtra has begun to develop the soteriological emphasis that would eventually blossom as new forms of meditation. Along with its unique rhetoric and pedagogical styles, it is those new practices that would eventually distinguish Ch'an as an independent school of sinitic Buddhism. The doctrinal context within which Ch'an ideas are placed in the *Vajrasamādhi* therefore says much about the philosophical influences that helped shape the early Ch'an movement in China and Korea and hopefully something about the theological milieu out of which Ch'an evolved.

Pōmnang's own motives in composing the *Vajrasamādhi* must be understood also as a response to the state of Buddhism in Silla in the latter half of the seventh century. The entrenched scholastic schools—especially Hwaōm—of the capital of Kyōngju wielded tremendous political and ecclesiastical influence, leaving little hope for the successful transplantation of a new school that as yet had little following even on the Chinese mainland. After his return from China and his tutelage under Tao-hsin, Pōmnang probably had at least nine years—we cannot know more precisely—to attempt to proselytize in a Korea that was said to have remained stubbornly unreceptive to his new teachings. Becoming frustrated with the progress of his mission, Pōmnang eventually resorted to textual forgery to bring attention to his message. Combining around a Tathāgatagarbha core a variety of doctrinal elements drawn from many different Mahāyāna traditions, Pōmnang used his sūtra as a vehicle to present surreptitiously the new message of Ch'an—and specifically the Tao-hsin school of Ch'an—to what would otherwise have been an antagonistic audience. To counter possible aspersions about the suspicious origins of the scripture, Pōmnang titled his new work the *Vajrasamādhi*, after a translated sūtra that had appeared in scriptural catalogues from almost the inception of Buddhism in East Asia but that was otherwise unknown and unavailable.

Given the preponderance of evidence raised here, claims of an Indian or

Chinese provenance for the *Vajrasamādhi* are no longer tenable. Indeed, the scenario presented for Sōn authorship of the sūtra provides a compelling motive for its composition, which will have major implications for our understanding of the development of the Korean Buddhist tradition. The *Vajrasamādhi* now emerges as the earliest text of Korean Sōn, antedating all other relevant documents by well over a century. It must be given a full accounting in any future treatment of the development of Korean Sōn. But just as significantly, the *Vajrasamādhi* also turns out to be one of the oldest extant works of all of Sinitic Ch'an. It predates the earliest works of the Northern Ch'an school by some three decades. The only Ch'an work that has to date been proven to be older is the *Erh-ju ssu-hsing lun*, attributed to the founder of Ch'an, Bodhidharma. The *Vajrasamādhi* also provides the only independent corroboration of the East Mountain teachings, which have heretofore been accessible only through later Northern school anthologies. Finally, the *Vajrasamādhi* provides an explicit example of the organicism of the East Asian Buddhist tradition, in which a sūtra composed in Korea was able to influence the evolution of Buddhism not only in the Chinese heartland, but also in regions as distant as Szechwan and Tibet.

Part Two

Translation

THE VAJRASAMĀDHI-SŪTRA
(BOOK OF ADMANTINE ABSORPTION)

Translated by an Anonym
During the Northern Liang Dynasty

Chapter One

Prologue

[365c24] Thus I once heard.¹ The Buddha was dwelling in the great city of King's House (Rājagṛha), on Mount Gr̥dhrakūṭa (Vulture Peak), together with a great assembly of ten thousand bhikṣus [ordained mendicants], all of whom had attained the arhat path. Their names were Śāriputra, Mahāmaudgalyāyana, Subhūti—there were many arhats such as these. [366a] Furthermore, there were two thousand bodhisattva-*mahāsattvas* [adepts intent on enlightenment]. Their names were Haet'al (Liberation; Skt. Vimukti) Bodhisattva, Simwang (Mind King; Skt. Cittarāja) Bodhisattva, Muju (Nonabiding; Skt. Apratiṣṭhita) Bodhisattva, and other bodhisattvas like these. Furthermore, there were eighty thousand elders (*gr̥hapati*). Their names were Elder Pōmhaeng (Chastity; Skt. Brahmācārya), Elder Taebōmhaeng (Great Chastity; Mahābrahmācārya), Elder Jyotiṣka (Kor. Suje; Luminary), and other elders like these.² Furthermore, there were six hundred million devas, dragons, yakṣas [demons], *gandharvas* [demigod musicians], aśuras [titans], *garuḍas* [mythical birds], *kinnaras* [half horses/half men], *mahorāgas* [great snakes], humans, and nonhumans.

At that time, the Lord, surrounded by the great congregation, preached a Mahāyāna sūtra on behalf of all the great congregation, entitled *Ilmi chinsil musang musaeng kyōlchōng silche pon'gangnihaeng* (Practice of the single taste, truth, signless, nonproduction, certitude, edge of reality, and the inspiration

¹ Typically, this stock opening to Buddhist texts is broken into two clauses: "Thus have I heard. Once . . ." (*evam mayā śrutam ekasmin samaye*). I translate it as a single clause, following Wōnhyo's analysis; see *KSGR* 1, pp. 362c27–366a3. John Brough has advocated this same interpretation ("Thus Have I Heard . . .," pp. 416–26), following the Tibetan commentarial tradition.

² As Mizuno (p. 42) has noted, these would be unusual personal names for Indians, and their use provides a significant clue of the East Asian origin of *VS*.

of original enlightenment). If one hears this sūtra or retains even one four-line verse of it, that person will then access the stage of the Buddha's knowledge; he will be able to proselyte sentient beings with appropriate expedients and become the great spiritual mentor (*kalyāṇamitra*) of all sentient beings.

After the Buddha had preached this sūtra, he folded his legs into full-lotus position and entered into the adamant absorption (*vajrasamādhi*), with his body and mind motionless.

At that time there was a bhikṣu named Agada in the congregation, who arose from his seat, joined his palms together, and genuflected in foreign fashion [*hogwe*; with his right knee on the ground]. Wishing to reiterate³ the meaning of this [sūtra that had just been preached], he recited gāthās:

That Lord who is filled with great friendliness,
 His wisdom penetrates without obstruction.
 Intending to ferry across sentient beings on a vast scale,
 He has explained the meaning of the one truth.
 All this was accomplished via the path that has a single taste,⁴
 Never by means of the Hīnayāna.
 The meaning, "taste," and place of his sermon,
 All leave the unreal far behind.
 They access the stage of wisdom of all the buddhas,
 That decisive and true edge of reality (*bhūtaḥkoṭi*).
 All the audience has transcended the world,
 There is no one who has not achieved liberation.
 All the innumerable bodhisattvas,
 Each ferry across all sentient beings.
 For the sake of the congregation, they question extensively and profoundly.
 Learning of the dharmas' characteristic of calm extinction,
 They access that place of certitude [of attaining enlightenment;
 (*samyaktva*)*niyāmāvakraṅti*].
 The Tathāgata, through his knowledge (*jñāna*) and expedients (*upāya*),
 Speaks so that [all beings] will be sure to access reality,
 All this is in accordance with the one vehicle,
 There are no extraneous tastes.
 In the same way that, soaked by a single rain,
 The multitudes of plants all grow verdantly.
 [So too], according to their natures, which are each discrete,
 Soaked by the dharma that has a single taste,

³ Following the Koryō II/Taishō edition; *VS*, p. 366a13.

⁴ The one vehicle of the buddhas, according to Wōnhyo; *KSGR* 1, p. 963b16–17.

All things achieve complete fulfillment,
 Just as if, soaked by a single rain,
 All their bodhi sprouts were matured.⁵
 Accessing the adamantine taste,
 He realizes the meditative absorption [that knows] the true reality of
 dharmas.
 He is certain to excise doubts and regrets,
 And perfect the seal of the one dharma.

⁵ Alluding to the famous simile of the rain of dharma that nurtures all living things. See *Miao-fa lien-hua ching* (*Saddharmapundarīka-sūtra*) 3, T 262.9.19a–20b; Leon Hurvitz, trans., *Lotus*, pp. 101–103.

Chapter Two

The Signless Dharma

[366b] Arising from his samādhi, the Lord then spoke these words, “The stage of wisdom of all the buddhas accesses the given nature of the real characteristic of dharmas.⁶ For this reason, [the buddhas’] expedients⁷ and superpowers (*abhijñā*)⁸ are all inspired by signlessness (*alakṣaṇatva*). The explicit meaning (*nitārtha*) of the one enlightenment⁹ is difficult to comprehend and difficult to access. It is not something that is known or cognized by any adherents of the two vehicles [of śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas]; it may only be known by the buddhas and bodhisattvas. All [the tathāgatas] explain the single taste [only] to those sentient beings who are capable of deliverance.”

At that time, Haet’al Bodhisattva arose from his seat, joined his palms together, genuflected in foreign fashion, and addressed the Buddha: “Lord! After the Buddha’s demise, the right dharma (*saddharma*) will vanish from the world and the semblance dharma (*pratirūpakadharmā*) will linger on in the world.¹⁰ During the final age of the dharma (*saddharmavipralopa*), sen-

⁶ “The stage of wisdom of all the buddhas” refers to the wisdom that is produced by accessing the vajrasamādhi. Wōnhyo interprets the “given nature” (*kyōlchōng sōng*) as follows: “this real characteristic of dharmas is not produced by the buddhas; its nature is itself just so, regardless of whether there are buddhas or not.” *KSGR*, p. 964b2–4.

⁷ The expedient display of eight stereotypical events in any buddha’s life (*p’alsang pang-p’yōn*), beginning with his descent from Tuṣita heaven, and culminating in *parinirvāna*; *KSGR* 1, p. 964b11–12.

⁸ These are the six superpowers: magical powers; divine ear; telepathy; divine eye; recollection of former existences; knowledge of the extinction of the outflows. *KSGR* 1, p. 964b12.

⁹ Wōnhyo glosses “the explicit meaning of the one enlightenment” as the one mind, original enlightenment, or the tathāgatagarbha. *KSGR* 1, p. 964b19–20.

¹⁰ Wōnhyo construes this passage as referring to *VS*’s audience. The preceding expanded (*vaipulya*) sūtra was intended for the period of *saddharma*, while *VS* is directed at the needs of beings in the semblance-dharma age. *KSGR* 1, p. 964c19–21. Actually *VS* here jumbles the transition period of *pratirūpakadharmā* and the final age of *saddharmavipralopa*. For a survey of

tient beings [who are tainted by] the five turbidities (*kaṣāya*)¹¹ will perform all types of evil actions and will transmigrate among the three realms of existence without respite. During that period, I beg that the Buddha, out of his friendliness and compassion, will proclaim for those later generations of sentient beings the single taste that is decisive and true, and prompt those sentient beings to achieve liberation together.”

The Buddha said, “Oh son of good family! Feel free to ask me about the causes surrounding my appearance in the world. I wanted to proselyte sentient beings and to prompt those sentient beings to obtain the fruition [of enlightenment] that transcends the world. This one great matter [of a buddha’s appearance in the world] is inconceivable, because it is performed out of great friendliness and great compassion. If I were not to respond [to your questions], then I would fall into niggardliness [for hoarding the dharma I have learned]. You should all listen attentively and carefully, and I will proclaim [the answers] for you.

“Oh son of good family! When you proselyte sentient beings, you should not conceive that proselytism either does or does not occur; such proselytism is great indeed! It enables all those sentient beings to leave behind mind and self, for both mind and self are originally void and calm.¹² If they attain voidness of mind, then that mind will not illusorily project anything. Free from all illusory projections, they will then attain nonproduction (*anutpatti*). The mind that does not produce anything derives from such nonprojection.”

Haet’al Bodhisattva addressed the Buddha: “The nature of the mind of sentient beings is originally void and calm. The essence of the mind that is void and calm is free from materiality (*rūpa*) and characteristics (*lakṣaṇa*). How are we to cultivate and train so that we may obtain that mind which is originally void? I entreat the Buddha to proclaim this for us, out of his friendliness and compassion.”

The Buddha replied, “Bodhisattva! All the characteristics of the mind

different Chinese Buddhist eschatological schemes, see David Chappell, “Early Forebodings of the Death of Buddhism,” pp. 122–54

¹¹ The five turbidities are five events that mark the gradual decay of the universe; they appear during the abiding period of an eon, or kalpa. (1) Turbidity of the kalpa, marking the beginning of the declining period of the kalpa; (2) turbidity of views, i.e., the wrong views of egoism, etc., (3) turbidity of defilements; (4) turbidity of sentient beings, the decline in their behavior; (5) turbidity of the lifespan, or the decreasing length of life.

¹² “‘Self’ means person; ‘mind’ means dharmas, because mind is the support and chief of all dharmas. At the time that one penetrates to the fact that all persons and dharmas are originally void, the signs at which one had grasped previously are not then produced. Therefore, both types of abandonment are simultaneously perfected.” KSGR 1, p. 965b29–965c3.

originally have no origin. As they originally have no original locus, [the mind is] void and calm, producing nothing. If the mind produces nothing, it then accesses void calmness.¹³ At that ground of the mind (*cittabhūmi*), where all is void and calm, one attains voidness of mind. Oh son of good family! The signless mind is free from both mind and self. It is the same with all the characteristics of dharmas.”

Haet'al Bodhisattva addressed the Buddha: “Lord! If sentient beings have a conception of self [i.e., grasping at personality] or a conception of mind [i.e., grasping at dharmas], what dharma will awaken those sentient beings and prompt them to leave behind such fetters (*samyojana*)?”

The Buddha replied, “Oh son of good family! If there is someone who retains a conception of self, he should be encouraged to contemplate the twelfefold chain of causal conditioning (*pratītyasamutpāda*). The twelfefold chain of causal conditioning originally derives from cause and fruition. The production of cause and fruition is stimulated by the operation of the mind. But the mind does not exist, much less the body. If there is a person who conceives of a self, he should be encouraged to abandon his view [that the self] exists. If there is a person who conceives that there is no self, he should be encouraged to abandon his view [that the self] does not exist. If a person conceives that the mind can be produced, he should be encouraged to abandon [his view that] the nature [of the mind] is subject to production. If a person conceives that the mind can be extinguished, he should be encouraged to abandon [his view that] the nature [of the mind] is subject to extinction. Once these views about the nature are extinguished, [366c] he will immediately approach the edge of reality.¹⁴ Why is this? Originally, production is not extinguished; originally, extinction is not produced. Both are nonextinct and unproduced, unproduced and nonextinct. It is just the same with the characteristics of all dharmas.”

Haet'al Bodhisattva addressed the Buddha: “Lord! What view is extinguished when a sentient being perceives that a dharma is produced? What

¹³ The equation drawn here between “nonproduction” (*anutpatti*) and “void calmness” (a synonym of *nirvāṇa*) is standard in the earliest stratum of Tathāgatagarbha materials. See William Grosnick, “Nonorigination and *Nirvāṇa* in the Early *Tathāgatagarbha* Literature,” pp. 33–43.

¹⁴ A relatively free rendering of a problematic passage, following the emendations introduced in the Yüan and Ming editions; *VS*, p. 366 nn. 13, 14. Wōnhyo tortuously tries to wring some sense out of this passage by interpreting each statement as meaning its exact opposite. His understanding of the passage's import, however, ends up being quite close to these later emendations. See *KSGR* 1, p. 966c18–25.

view is extinguished when a sentient being perceives that a dharma ceases?”¹⁵

The Buddha replied, “Bodhisattva. When a sentient being perceives that a dharma is produced, this causes the extinction of the view of nonexistence. When he sees the extinction of a dharma, this causes the extinction of the view of existence. Once these views are extinguished, the true nonexistence of dharmas is achieved and he accesses certitude, where [the attainment of the state of] nonproduction is certain.”

Haet'al Bodhisattva addressed the Buddha: “Lord! If a sentient being were encouraged to linger in the state of nonproduction, would that mean [he had achieved the acceptance of] the nonproduction [of dharmas; *anutpattika-(dharmakṣānti)*]?”

The Buddha replied, “Were one to linger in nonproduction, that would actually be producing something. Why is this? Only when one does not linger in nonproduction is it really nonproduction. Bodhisattva! If one produces nonproduction, production and extinction would therewith be produced. When production and extinction are both extinguished, production inherently would not be produced and the mind would be constantly void and calm; and that which is void and calm is nonabiding. Only the mind that does not abide anywhere is really unproduced.”

Haet'al Bodhisattva addressed the Buddha: “If the mind does not abide anywhere, then what need is there for religious practice? [When the mind abides nowhere, is that then a state in which] there is still training left to complete (*śaikṣa*) or where no further training is necessary (*aśaikṣa*)?”

The Buddha replied, “Bodhisattva! The mind that is unproduced—that mind has neither egress nor access. It is the original tathāgatagarbha, whose nature is calm and motionless. It is neither subject to further training nor free from further training. When there is neither training nor nontraining—that then is the state where no further training is necessary. ‘Training’ means to ensure that there is no need for either training or not training.”

Haet'al Bodhisattva addressed the Buddha: “How is it that the nature of the tathāgatagarbha is calm and motionless?”

The Buddha replied, “The tathāgatagarbha is that characteristic of discriminative awareness, subject to production and extinction, which conceals the principle so that it is not made manifest. This [is what is meant by the statement] ‘the nature of the tathāgatagarbha is calm and motionless.’ ”

Haet'al Bodhisattva addressed the Buddha: “What is [meant by the state-

¹⁵ This line is missing in the Wōnhyo and K'ai-pao editions. VS, p. 366 n. 16.

ment] ‘that characteristic of discriminative awareness [which is] subject to production and extinction?’”

The Buddha replied, “Bodhisattva! The principle is free from either acceptance or rejection. If there were acceptance or rejection, then all kinds of thoughts would be produced. The thousands of conceptions and myriad of mentations are marked by production and extinction.

“Bodhisattva! Contemplate the characteristics of the original nature [viz., the *tathāgatagarbha*] and the principle will become perfected in and of itself. The thousands of conceptions and myriad of mentations do not augment the principles of the path; they instead agitate [the mind] in vain so that one loses the original mind-king (*cittarāja*) [the one mind]. If there are neither conceptions nor mentations, then both production and extinction will vanish and, accordingly (*yathābhūta*), will not be produced. All [eight] consciousnesses will become peaceful and calm, the currents [*ogha*; of desire, existence, and ignorance] will not be produced, and the five dharmas will be purified. This is called the Mahāyāna.¹⁶

“Bodhisattva! By accessing the purity of the five dharmas, the mind becomes free from deception. Once deception has vanished, one immediately accesses the stage of the *tathāgatas*’ own enlightened, sanctified knowledge. One who accesses this stage of wisdom is well aware that all things are unproduced from the beginning; and as he is aware that they originally are unproduced, he thence is free from deceptive conceptions.”

Haet’al Bodhisattva addressed the Buddha: “Lord! One who is free from deceptive conceptions should have nothing that needs to be either tranquilized or brought to an end.”¹⁷

The Buddha responded, “Bodhisattva! Deceptions are originally unproduced; hence, there are no deceptions that need to be brought to an end. By knowing that the mind is actually no-mind, there then is no mind that needs to be tranquilized. Once [the mind] is free from both differentiation and discrimination, the consciousnesses that manifest sensory objects are not

¹⁶ Following Wōnhyo’s interpretation; *KSGR* 1, pp. 969b–970b. Wōnhyo takes the five dharmas as the pure *dharmadhātu*, which derives from the ninth *amalavijñāna*, and the four wisdoms into which the other eight consciousnesses transmute; see *KSGR* 1, p. 970a28–b1. A different list appears in the *Lañkāvatāra-sūtra* (Suzuki, trans., p. 194): name, form, discrimination, right knowledge, and thusness.

¹⁷ As Wōnhyo notes, the issue raised in this question is that someone who has realized the state of nonconceptualization would be unable to conceive either of any mental concept that needs to be controlled or of any conception of a person who actually performs such controlling. Such a position would imply that there was no such thing as actualized enlightenment—that is, a process of spiritual development by which enlightenment is achieved. *KSGR* 1, p. 970b26–28.

produced. When there is nothing produced that needs to be tranquillized, this then would be nontranquillization—but also *not* nontranquillization. [367a] Why is this? Because [true] tranquillization actually tranquillizes nothing.”¹⁸

Haet'al Bodhisattva addressed the Buddha: “Lord! If tranquillization is nontranquillization, then tranquillization would be produced. How can you say it is unproduced?”

The Buddha replied, “Bodhisattva! At the moment when tranquillization occurs it is produced, but after it is tranquillized there is no further tranquillization necessary. One should not linger in either nontranquillization or a nonabiding state.”

Haet'al Bodhisattva addressed the Buddha: “Lord! To what does the mind that produces nothing cling? What does it reject? In what characteristic of dharma does it linger?”

The Buddha replied, “The mind that produces nothing neither clings to anything nor rejects anything. It does not linger over either mind or dharmas.”

Haet'al Bodhisattva addressed the Buddha: “What do you mean by saying ‘it does not linger over either mind or dharmas?’”

The Buddha replied, “Not producing thoughts is what is meant by not lingering over the mind. Not producing dharmas is what is meant by not lingering over dharmas.

“Oh son of good family! If one does not produce [a conception of] either mind or dharmas, [the mind] will then have no support (*apraṭiṣṭhita*). Not lingering over any compounded thing (*saṃskāra*), the mind will be constantly void and calm, without any extraneous characteristics. It will be just like space, which is motionless and nonabiding, ungenerated and unproduced, and free from either that or this. Once one obtains the eye of the voidness of mind and the body of the voidness of dharmas, the five skandhas [aggregates of being] and the six sense-bases will all become void and calm.

“Oh son of good family! One who cultivates the dharma of voidness does not base himself on the three realms of existence and does not linger over the specific practices of the *Vinaya* [the discipline]. Pure and free from thoughts (*munyōm*), he neither appropriates nor releases anything. His nature is the same as adamant, which is not pulverized even by the triratna [the three gems of the Buddha, Dharma, and Saṃgha]. His mind, emptied, is motionless and endowed with all the six pāramitās [perfections].”

¹⁸ Cf. the parallel statement in *Hsin-hsin ming* (*T* 2010.48.376c25): “If motion is tranquillized, that is nontranquillization.”

Haet'al Bodhisattva addressed the Buddha: "Lord! All the six pāramitās have characteristics. But are dharmas that have characteristics capable of inducing transcendence?"

The Buddha replied, "Oh son of good family! The six pāramitās of which I have spoken are signless and inactive (*muwi*). Why is this? If a person accesses [the essence of the mind] and forsakes desires (*kāmvītarāgya*), his mind will become constant and pure. Through his true speech, expedient devices, and original inspiration, he will inspire others. This is *dānapāramitā* [perfection of giving]. As his earnest thoughts are tenacious and intent, his mind is constantly unabiding, pure, and untainted and does not cling to the three realms. This is *śīlapāramitā* [perfection of morality]. Cultivating voidness and extricating himself from the fetters, he does not rely on any existing thing; he calms and quietens the three types of action [via body, speech, and mind] and does not linger in either body or mind. This is *kṣāntipāramitā* [perfection of patience]. Abandoning names and classifications, he overcomes the views of both voidness and existence and delves deeply into the voidness of the skandhas. This is *viryāpāramitā* [perfection of vigor]. Abandoning completely void calmness [nirvāṇa], he does not linger in any type of voidness. The mind that subsists nowhere resides in great voidness.¹⁹ This is *dhyānapāramitā* [perfection of meditation]. While the mind is free from all mental characteristics, it does not cling to vacuous voidness. While no compounded things are produced, one does not realize calm extinction. Where the mind has neither egress nor access, the nature is constantly in equilibrium. The edge of reality of all dharmas has the nature of certitude [of enlightenment]. One does not rely on any of the *bhūmis* [the final ten stages of practice] and does not linger in wisdom. This is *prajñāpāramitā* [perfection of wisdom].

"Oh son of good family! Since all these six pāramitās gain the original inspiration and access the nature of certitude, they supernally transcend the world. This is unobstructed liberation.

"Oh son of good family! Dharmas that are marked in this way by liberation are all signless. To practice them is also to be free from both liberation and bondage. This is what is meant by liberation. Why is this? The characteristic of liberation [367b] is to be free from both characteristics and practices; it is motionless and undisturbed. It is calm and quiet nirvāṇa, but it also does not cling to the characteristics of nirvāṇa."

¹⁹ Following Wōnhyo; *KSGR* 1, p. 971c28. The Koryō II/Taishō recension reads instead: "The mind that subsists nowhere does not subsist in great voidness"; *VS*, p. 367a23.

Haet'al Bodhisattva heard these words. His mind greatly pleased and elated, he gained what he never had before (*adbhūta*). Wishing to proclaim the meaning and intent [of this sermon], he recited these gāthās:

That Lord who is replete in great enlightenment,
 Has expounded the dharma for this congregation.
 It has all been explained from the standpoint of the one vehicle,
 Drawing nothing from the paths of either of the two vehicles.
 The signless inspiration that has a single taste,
 Is like great space,
 In that there is nothing it does not embrace.
 According to the differences in each of their natures,
 All things gain the original locus.
 To the extent that they abandon mind and self,
 The one dharma is consummated.
 All practices that involve identity and difference,
 Gain the original inspiration,
 And extirpate dualistic views.
 One also neither lingers in, nor clings to, the realization,
 Of that nirvāṇa which is calm and tranquil.
 Accessing that place of certitude,
 There are neither characteristics nor practices.
 In that stage of calm extinction where the mind is void,
 The calm, extinct mind is unproduced.
 It is identical to the adamant nature,
 Which is not pulverized by the triratna.
 Endowed with all six pāramitās,
 One ferries across all sentient beings.
 The Hīnayāna is never capable,
 Of supernally transcending the three realms of existence.
 The dharma seal that has a single taste,
 Is perfected by the one vehicle.

At that time, the great congregation heard the exposition of these ideas. Their minds greatly pleased and elated, they were able to abandon [all conceptions of] mind and self. They accessed voidness and signlessness, which are broad and expansive, vacant and vast. All gained certitude, freeing themselves from the fetters and drying up the outflows [*āsrava*; of existence, nonexistence, and speculative views].²⁰

²⁰ Wōnhyo glosses these experiences as implying that the congregation accessed the path of vision (*darśanamārga*), the initiation into sagehood. *KSGR* 1, p. 973b6.

Chapter Three

The Practice of Nonproduction

[367b20] At that time Simwang Bodhisattva heard the Buddha's explanation of the dharma, which transcended the three realms of existence and was inconceivable. Arising from his seat he joined his palms together in supplication and asked in gāthās:

The meaning of what the Tathāgata has said,
Transcends the world and is free from characteristics,
It enables all sentient beings,
To complete the annihilation of the outflows.
Eradicating the bonds and emptying both mind and self,
This then will be [the state of] nonproduction.
But how will one gain the acceptance of the nonproduction [of dharmas],
If there is nothing that is produced?

At that time, the Buddha proclaimed to Simwang Bodhisattva: “Oh son of good family! The acceptance of the nonproduction of dharmas [means to realize that] dharmas are originally unproduced and that all practices produce nothing. As there is no way to practice this nonproduction, achieving the acceptance of nonproduction is in fact a deception.”

Simwang Bodhisattva asked, “Lord! You say that ‘achieving the acceptance of nonproduction is in fact a deception.’ [367c] [But is the converse then true: that] nonachievement and nonacceptance perforce are not deceptions?”

The Buddha replied, “Not so. Why is this? If nonachievement and nonacceptance exist, then so would achievement. If achievement and acceptance²¹ exist, then so would production. If achievement is produced,

²¹ Following the Koryō II/Taishō edition. Both the Wōnhyo and K'ai-pao recensions read *chu* (“abiding”) for *in* (“acceptance”) here; *VS*, p. 367 n. 8.

there then would exist dharmas that are the objects of that achievement. So both [achievement and acceptance] are deceptions.”

Simwang Bodhisattva asked, “Lord! How is it that the mind may be free from either acceptance or production and yet not be deceived?”

The Buddha replied, “The mind that is free from both acceptance and production—that mind has neither form nor shape.²² It is like heat [lit. the nature of fire], which, though latent in wood, cannot be found there. This is because the nature [of the mind] is fixed.²³ [Mind] is nothing more than a name and a word; its nature is unascertainable. Wishing to allude to this principle, [the buddhas] have provisionally named it [mind], but this name is unascertainable. This is also the case for the characteristics of the mind: their location cannot be found. If one knows that the mind is like this, the mind will then not produce anything.

“Oh son of good family! The nature and characteristics of the mind are like the *āmalaka* (myrobalan) fruit: they are not self-generated; they are not generated by some external agent; they are not produced in conjunction with something else; they are not produced in the absence of a cause for that production.²⁴ Why is this? Because these conditions [of production and extinction] alternate successively. These conditions are generated, but there is no production; these conditions decay, but there is no extinction. Whether hidden or made manifest, [nature and characteristics] are signless. Their fun-

²² See Pao-chih’s *Shih-ssu-k’o sung*, in *Ching-teh ch’uan-teng lu* 29, T 2076.51.451b5: “The mind-essence has neither form nor shape”

²³ For this simile, see *Kuang Po-lun pen*, T 1570.31.185b21–26, and chapter 8 *infra*. Wōnhyo explains this simile as follows. Heat may be latent in wood, but that “heat” can never be isolated from “wood.” In the same way innumerable dharmas may be latent inside the principle, but they cannot be isolated from that principle. While heat therefore may ultimately be unascertainable, we know that heat nevertheless exists, in the same way, while the vast numbers of wholesome qualities inherent in the principle may ultimately be unascertainable, the adept can draw upon them in his spiritual practice. *KSGR* 2, p. 974a18–23.

²⁴ The rendering of the last alternative follows Wōnhyo’s interpretation; *KSGR* 2, p. 974b9–11. Wōnhyo interprets these four alternatives as follows: “As far as these four negations are concerned, because they [the fruits of the seeds] are dependent upon conditions [such as soil, water, and sunlight], ‘they are not self-generated.’ Because [the fruits grow from] their own seeds, ‘they are not generated by some external agent.’ Because they are inactive (*akarmaka*) [from an absolute standpoint], ‘they do not arise in conjunction with something else.’ And yet, because they do function, ‘they are not produced in the absence of a cause for that production [lit., are not unproduced].’” *KSGR* 2, p. 974b4–6

The myrobalan is used in *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* as a metaphor for the perfect clarity of insight that comes through accessing the vajrasamādhi. “If there is a bodhisattva who abides in this vajrasamādhi, he will see that all dharmas have no obstructions, just as if they were myrobalans in one’s palm (*kāratālāmalakavat*)” *Ta-p’an-nieh-p’an ching* 24, T 374.12.509c5–8, noted in Liebenthal, p. 371. For other references to the myrobalan in Buddhist literature, see Alex Wayman, “Notes on the Three Myrobalans,” pp. 63–77.

damental principle is calm and extinct. There is no place where they abide, nor is there seen anything that abides, because their natures are fixed.

“This fixed nature is neither unitary nor different; neither evanescent nor permanent; it has neither access nor egress and is neither produced nor extinguished. It abandons all four of these alternatives (*catuṣkoṭi*), for the pathways of words and speech are eradicated (*ōnōdodan*).²⁵ This is the case as well for the unproduced nature of the mind: how can it be said that it is either produced or unproduced, either accepted or not accepted?

“If a person claims that the mind may either achieve [something] or abide [somewhere] and takes this as his [wrong] view, then he will not attain *anuttarasamyaksambodhi* [complete, perfect enlightenment] and *prajñā*. This is the ‘long night’ [of *saṃsāra*]. One who has comprehended the mind-nature knows that the mind-nature is thus and that the nature is also thus. This is the practice of nonproduction.”

Simwang Bodhisattva commented, “Lord! As the mind is originally thus, it will not produce such practices. As all practices are unproduced, there will be no practice that produces anything and this nonproduction will then not need to be practiced. This in fact is the practice of nonproduction.”

The Buddha asked, “Oh son of good family! Can you realize the practice of nonproduction by not producing anything?”

Simwang Bodhisattva replied, “No. And why is this? In the actual practice of nonproduction, both nature and characteristics are void and calm. There is neither vision nor hearing; neither gain nor loss; neither words nor speech; neither cognition nor characteristics; neither clinging nor rejection. So how could one cling to this realization? If one clings to this realization, this would in fact serve [as the cause of] disputation and contention. Only when there is neither disputation nor contention is it the practice of nonproduction.”

The Buddha said, “Have you attained *anuttarasamyaksambodhi*?”²⁶

Simwang Bodhisattva responded, “Lord! I am free from any attainment of *anuttarasamyaksambodhi*. And why is this? The bodhi-nature has neither

²⁵ The locus classicus for this phrase is *Sutta-nipāta*, v.1076, describing the state of *nirvāṇa*: “There is no means of knowing him who has gone to rest,/ He has nothing that could be named./ When all dharmas are eradicated,/ All paths of speech are also eradicated” (*attan-gatassa na pamāṇam atthi; yena nam vajju, tam tassa n’atthi; sabbesu dhammesu samuhatesu; samuhata vāda-pathā pi sabbe tī*). For discussion of the significance of this verse, see Luis Gómez, “Proto-Mādhyamika in the Pāli Canon,” p. 146, and for further references to the phrase in Sanskrit literature, p. 158 n. 5.

²⁶ For a similar exchange, cf. *Chin-kang po-jo po-lo-mi ching* [*Vajracchedikāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra*], T 235.8.749b11–15, and 751c20–27.

gain nor loss, neither attention nor cognition, for it is free from all differentiated characteristics. The pure nature actually exists in such nondiscrimination. This nature is free from any extraneous admixture [such as the dichotomies of production and extinction or subject and object]: it is free from words and speech; it neither exists nor does not exist; it is neither aware nor nescient.

“So too is this case for all the dharmas [training methods] that can be cultivated. Why is this? All dharmas and practices have no loci that can be found, because their natures are fixed. [368a] Originally, they are free from any semblance of attainment or nonattainment. So how can one attain *anuttarasamyaksambodhi*?”

The Buddha replied, “So it is, so it is. As you have said, all of the activities of mind are nothing but signlessness; their essences are calm and unproduced. It is the same as well with each and every consciousness. Why is this? The eye and visual contact are both void and calm. [Visual] consciousness is also void and calm: it is free from any characteristic of agitation or motionlessness. Since it is free internally of the three feelings [*vedanā*; pain, pleasure, and neutral feeling], the three feelings are calm and extinct. So too is this the case for auditory, olfactory, gustatory, tactile, and mental [consciousnesses], as well as mind-consciousness, *mano[vijñāna]*,²⁷ and *ālaya* consciousness: as all of them are also unproduced, they are the mind that is calm and extinct and the mind that produces nothing.²⁸ But if one gives rise to the mind that is calm and extinct and the mind that produces nothing, this then would be practice that produces something, not the practice of nonproduction.

“Bodhisattva! Thus internally are generated three feelings, three karmic actions, and three moral restraints [of physical, verbal, and mental actions]. If these are already calm and extinct, the producing mind will not be pro-

²⁷ “Mental [consciousness]” (*ūi*), “mind-consciousness” (*ūisik*), and *manovijñāna* (*malna [sik]*) are actually the translations and transliteration of the same sixth consciousness (the *mano-vijñāna*), obvious indications that the author was not working from Sanskrit materials. Wōnhyo tries to resolve the reiteration by specifying that both “mental” and “mind-consciousness” refer to the sixth consciousness—that consciousness being called *ūi* (= memory) when it is past, *ūisik* (mental consciousness) when it is present, and *sim* (mind) when it is future. *Manovijñāna* then refers instead to the seventh consciousness, the governing consciousness (*kliṣṭamano-vijñāna*). See KSGR 2, p. 976a17–20.

²⁸ This passage, especially as it has been brought out in Wōnhyo’s interpretation, closely parallels statements concerning the meaning of nonproduction made by Ching-chüeh (683–750?), the Northern school adept who compiled *Leng-ch’ieh shih-tzu chi*, in his *Po-jo-hsin ching chu-chieh* (Annotation and explication of the *Heart Sūtra*): “Thus we know that all dharmas are tranquil and calm, unproduced and unextinguished.” The text is reproduced in Yanagida, *Shoki Zenshū shisho*, p. 602.

duced and the mind will be constantly calm and extinct, without efficacy or function. He does not evince any characteristic of calm extinction; but he also does not insist on not corroborating [such a characteristic]. What is worth lingering in is the state of nonabiding, wherein is encoded (*ch'ongji; dhārayati*) signlessness. Then, there will be none of these three, such as the three feelings, and so forth, for all will be calm and extinct, pure and nonabiding. He need not access samādhi; he need not persist in sitting in dhyāna. This is nonproduction and freedom from practice.”

Simwang Bodhisattva asked, “Dhyāna can suppress all agitation and allay all illusory distractions. Why this negation of dhyāna?”

The Buddha replied, “Bodhisattva! Dhyāna in fact is agitation. Being neither agitated nor concentrated is the dhyāna that produces nothing. The nature of dhyāna is to produce nothing; it has no characteristics of the dhyāna that does produce something. The nature of dhyāna is to linger nowhere; it leaves far behind the agitation caused by trying to linger in dhyāna. Know that the nature of dhyāna is free from both agitation and calmness and you will immediately attain the [acceptance of the] nonproduction [of dharmas] and the prajñā that produces nothing. But also do not rely on, or linger over, these. Because of this knowledge, the mind also will not be agitated. For this reason, you will attain the prajñāpāramitā that produces nothing.”

Simwang Bodhisattva said, “Lord! The prajñā that produces nothing does not abide anywhere, and yet there is no place where it is not. The mind has no abiding place and there is no place where the mind can abide. When there is no abiding and no mind (*musim*), the mind will then abide in nonproduction. The mind that so abides is in fact abiding in nonproduction.

“Lord! The mind’s practice of nonproduction is inconceivable. As it is inconceivable, it is both effable and ineffable.”

The Buddha said, “So it is, so it is.”

Simwang Bodhisattva heard these words and, praising its miraculousness, recited these gāthās:

That Lord who is replete in great knowledge,
Has explained extensively the dharma of nonproduction.
I have heard what has never been heard before,
Now has been explained what had yet to be explained.
Like the pure sweet dew,
That appears but once in a long while,
[So too is this dharma] difficult to encounter and difficult to imagine.
Difficult too is it to hear it,

It is the unsurpassed, excellent field of merit (*punyaḥsetra*),
The supremely efficacious, sublime medicine.
It is in order to ferry across sentient beings,
That it has now been proclaimed.

At that time, all those in the congregation heard these words and attained the [acceptance of] the nonproduction [of dharmas] as well as the *prajñā* that produces nothing.

Chapter Four

The Inspiration of Original Enlightenment²⁹

[368b2] At that time Muju Bodhisattva heard what the Buddha said about the single taste being true and inconceivable. From the distant past up to the present, [Muju] had drawn near to the tathāgatas' seats and listened to [the tathāgatas] carefully and with full attention. Accessing that pure, transparent place, his body and mind were motionless.³⁰

At that time, the Buddha addressed Muju Bodhisattva: “Whence have you come? Where now have you arrived?”

Muju Bodhisattva replied, “Lord! I come from where there is no origin, and have now arrived where there is no origin.”³¹

The Buddha said, “You originally came from nowhere and now you have also arrived nowhere. As you have gained the original inspiration (*porri*), which is inconceivable, you are a bodhisattva-*mahāsattva*.”

²⁹ According to Wōnhyo's exegesis, chapter 4 is concerned with the phenomenal, production-and-extinction aspect of the one mind's two aspects. The absolute, true-thusness aspect will be treated in the following chapter. See *KSGR* 2, p. 982b17–18.

³⁰ “Motionless” (*acala*) is not only the attribute of samādhi, as seen before in the sūtra with reference to the vajrasamādhi, but also a samādhi in its own right; see sources listed in Franklin Edgerton, *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Dictionary*, p. 6 s.v. “acala.”

³¹ Wōnhyo explains: “This explains [the process of practice] from the stage of an ordinary person (*prthagjana*) to the arrival at the stage of sanctity. When a person arrives at the stage of sanctity, he looks back on [his progress through] past and present. In the past, when he was at the stage of the ordinary person and first aroused his will [to practice and set out on the path], he himself believed that his own mind was originally free from production and motion, because the origin of production and motion can, ultimately, never be found. Now, once he has arrived at the stage of sanctity and has attained [the acceptance of] the nonproduction [of dharmas], he knows through realization that his own mind is originally unproduced, because an origin for such production cannot be found. Hence, he knows that he has first ‘come from where there is no origin’; and the place where he has now arrived is also ‘where there is no origin’ ” *KSGR* 2, pp. 977b29–977c5.

Then, while emitting a great ray of light that pervaded the many thousands of world-systems, he recited gāthās:

How great you are, oh bodhisattva,
 You who are replete in knowledge and wisdom.
 Constantly by means of the original inspiration,
 You inspire sentient beings.
 In all the four postures [walking, standing, sitting, lying],
 You constantly abide in the original inspiration,
 Guiding all the classes of beings,
 Without either coming or going.

At that time, Muju Bodhisattva addressed the Buddha: “Lord! Through what inspiring transmutation may one transmute all the affective consciousnesses of sentient beings so that they will access the *amala*[-*vijñāna*; immaculate consciousness]?”³²

The Buddha replied, “All the buddhas, the tathāgatas, constantly transmute all the consciousnesses by means of the one enlightenment so that they will access the *amala*. Why is this? The original enlightenment³³ of each and every sentient being is constantly enlightening all sentient beings by means of that one enlightenment, prompting them all to regain their original enlightenment. They become enlightened to the fact that all the affective consciousnesses are void, calm, and unproduced. Why is this? It is a given that the original natures [of the eight consciousnesses] are originally motionless.”

Muju Bodhisattva asked, “Each and every one³⁴ of the eight conscious-

³² The affective consciousnesses refer to the eight consciousnesses, all of which are subject to the interplay of the defilements. Only the ninth consciousness, the *amalavijñāna*, is unaffected thereby, thus earning its designation as the “immaculate consciousness.” Wōnhyo presumes that this passage was the source for Parāmartha’s theory of a ninth consciousness; *KSGR* 2, p. 978a7–8, and see discussion in part 1, chapter 3. The transcription *ammara* (Ch. *an-mo-lo*) for the Sanskrit word *amala* as used here, is generally described as being peculiar to the T’ien-t’ai tradition, and especially to Chih-i’s (539–597) writings (see Mizuno, pp. 45–46; Liebhenthal, p. 371 n. 1). It is not, however, exclusive to that tradition. The same transcription is found, for example, in Chinese Pure Land works (Ch’uan-teng’s *Ching-t’u sheng wu-sheng lun*, *T* 1975.47.381c17), Ch’an materials (Yen-shou’s *Tsung-ching lu* 90, *T* 2016.48.907b16), Korean Yogācāra commentaries (Tullyun’s *Yugaron-ki* 13A, *T* 1828.42.605b22), and Japanese exegeses (Jōnen’s *Gyōrinshō* 50, *T* 2409.76.352c7). The transcription is also used frequently in East Asian apocryphal compositions, such as at *Shou-leng-yen ching* 4, *T* 745.19.123c15. This rendering antedates Parāmartha’s own works, which adopt the alternate *a-mo-lo*.

³³ Wōnhyo glosses original enlightenment as the *amalavijñāna*; *KSGR* 2, p. 978a20.

³⁴ Wōnhyo glosses *kail* as *ilch’e* (“each and every”) *KSGR* 2, p. 978b7. The Yüan and Ming editions have simply changed the following “eight” to *ch’e* to bring out the same sense; *VS*, p. 368b18, n. 13.

nesses is produced, conditioned by the sense realms. So how is it that they are motionless?”

The Buddha answered, “All the sense realms are originally void. All consciousnesses are originally void. Being void, their natures are not subject to conditions. So how are they produced by conditions?”

Muju Bodhisattva retorted, “If all the sense realms are void, then how can there be vision?”

The Buddha replied, “Vision is in fact deceptive. Why so? All the myriad of existing things are unproduced and signless. Originally they have no names for themselves and are all void and calm. So too is this the case for all characteristics of dharmas. The bodies of all sentient beings are also just the same. And if even those bodies do not exist, then how much less so could vision!”

Muju Bodhisattva said, “If all sense realms are void, all bodies are void, and all consciousnesses are void, then enlightenment too must be void.”

The Buddha replied, “Each and every enlightenment has a given nature that is neither destroyed nor annihilated. They are neither void nor nonvoid, for they are free from voidness or nonvoidness.”

Muju Bodhisattva remarked, “It is the same too for all the sense realms. They are not marked by voidness and yet they must be so marked.”

The Buddha assented, “So it is. The natures of all the sense realms are originally fixed. The bases of those fixed natures are not located anywhere.”

Muju Bodhisattva said, “Enlightenment is also the same: it is not located anywhere.” [368c]

The Buddha assented, “So it is. Because enlightenment has no locus, it is pure. As it is pure, it is free from [any semblance of such a limiting concept as] enlightenment. As material things have no locus, they are pure. As they are pure, they are free from [any such limiting concept] as materiality.”

Muju Bodhisattva remarked, “The mind and the visual consciousness as well are similarly inconceivable.”

The Buddha said, “Yes, the mind and the visual consciousness as well are similarly inconceivable. Why is this? Materiality has no location; it is pure and nameless. It does not intrude into the internal [sense-bases]. The visual [base] has no location; it is pure and sightless. It does not go out into the external [sense objects]. The mind has no location; it is pure and unsurpassed, and has no place where it is produced. Consciousness has no location; it is pure and motionless, not distinguished by conditions. Its nature is entirely void and calm. That nature is free from any semblance of enlight-

enment, but if one becomes enlightened [that nature too] will then be enlightened [completing the process of actualizing enlightenment].

“Oh son of good family! Once one awakens to the knowledge that there is no enlightenment,³⁵ all the consciousnesses then access [enlightenment]. Why is this? At the stage of adamant knowledge, the path leading to liberation (*vimuktimārga*) is eradicated. Once it is eradicated, you access the nonabiding stage [of sublime enlightenment] where there is neither egress nor access, that stage of certitude where the mind has no locus. That stage is pure, like transparent beryl³⁶ [representing the great, perfect mirror wisdom (*ādarśanājñāna*)]. That nature is constantly in equilibrium, like the great earth [representing the impartial wisdom (*samatājñāna*)]. Enlightened, sublime, contemplative examination [representing the subsequently obtained wisdom (*pratyavekṣanājñāna*)] is like the effulgence of the sun of wisdom.³⁷ [One’s ability to] inspire [others] is perfected and one gains original [enlightenment]; this is like the great rain of dharma [representing the wisdom that has accomplished what was to be done (*kṛtyānuṣṭhānājñāna*)]. Accessing this knowledge is accessing the buddhas’ stage of knowledge [the sublime enlightenment where these four types of wisdom are perfected]. For one who has accessed this stage of knowledge, none of the consciousnesses is produced.”³⁸

Muju Bodhisattva said, “The Tathāgata has explained that the sanctified dynamism of the one enlightenment and the stage of [sublime enlightenment where] the four vast wisdoms [are perfected] are in fact the enlightened

³⁵ Following Rhi Ki-yong’s interpretation in *Kūmgang sammaegyōng-ron*, p. 143. Wōnhyo clarifies that this realization refers to the wisdom produced by the actualized enlightenment. *KSGR* 2, p. 979a27–28.

³⁶ In Buddhist texts, the nominal binom *yuri* (Ch. *liu-li*) should be translated as “beryl,” from Pali *veluriyam*, not the more common rendering of “glass.” See Edward Schafer, “Combined Supplements to *Mathews*,” s.v. “liu-li.”

³⁷ Cf. the description of *pratyavekṣanājñāna* in *Ch’eng wei-shih lun* 10, T 1585.31.56a21–25.

³⁸ Wōnhyo interprets this paragraph in terms of the actualized enlightenment.

This section elucidates the fact that all consciousnesses are unproduced. It seeks to explain that, originally, all the consciousnesses are produced in accordance with ignorance. Now, via the actualized enlightenment, [these consciousnesses] return to the fountainhead of the mind, and once they return to the fountainhead of the mind none of the consciousnesses is then produced. Because the consciousnesses are not produced, the actualized enlightenment is perfectly complete. . . . When the actualized enlightenment is complete, the eight consciousnesses are not produced. This is because, to the extent that enlightenment is devoid of enlightenment, all the consciousnesses will not exist, and because, to the extent that that enlightenment is ultimate, one returns to the fountainhead of the mind. Hence the statement was made that “all the consciousnesses then access [enlightenment]” *KSGR* 2, p. 979a25–b6.

inspiration that is innate in all sentient beings. And why is this? Because these are present originally in the bodies of all sentient beings.”³⁹

The Buddha replied, “So it is. And why is this so? Although all sentient beings are originally free from outflows and all wholesome benefits are originally innate in them, they are being pricked by the thorn of desire, which they have yet to overcome [and thus do not realize that they are originally enlightened].”⁴⁰

Muju Bodhisattva asked, “If there is a sentient being who has yet to draw on the original inspiration and who [continues to have the desire to] gather and accumulate [mundane experiences], then how will he overcome that which is difficult to overcome?”

The Buddha replied, “Whether discrimination and, therewith, the taints occur en masse or solitarily, if his spirit reverts (*hoesin*) to abide in the cave of voidness, he will overcome that which is difficult to overcome.⁴¹ Liberated from the bonds of Māra [demonic forces personified], he will sit supernally on the open ground where the consciousnesses and the skandhas [will be in a state of] *parinirvāṇa*.”⁴²

³⁹ Wōnhyo explains that the one enlightenment is actually both the actualized and original enlightenments, which are nondual since “the perfection of the actualized enlightenment is in fact identical to the original enlightenment.” Wōnhyo then goes ahead to draw a tautology between the one enlightenment, the dharmakāya of the buddhas, and the original enlightenment that is inherent in all sentient beings. That immanent original enlightenment is the “enlightened inspiration that is innate in all sentient beings . . . , which influences the minds of sentient beings to perform the two kinds of action [benefitting oneself and others].” *KSGR* 2, p. 979c17–25.

⁴⁰ “In original enlightenment, the immeasurable meritorious qualities inherent in the [enlightened] nature are not tainted or affected by the three outflows; hence, the statement was made that [sentient beings] ‘are originally free from outflows.’ With these [qualities] as the basis, one produces all wholesome actions and benefits; hence, the statement ‘all wholesome benefits are originally innate.’ However, while one may be endowed with the original enlightenment, one is [still] overwhelmed by adventitious defilements and ‘the thorn of desire.’ Therefore, one has not yet gained one’s own original enlightenment.” *KSGR* 2, pp. 979c28–980a2.

⁴¹ This sentence is adapted from a citation to *Udānavarga* (*Fa-chi yao-sung ching* 4, *T* 213.4.799a26–27) appearing in *Mahāyānasamgraha*; see *She ta-sheng lun* 2, *T* 1593.31.119a18–19. Noted by Liebenthal, p. 364, though his citation to *T* 212 is wrong.

⁴² The phrase “sit supernally on the open ground” is cited also in *Li-tai fa-pao chi* (*T* 2075.51 193a8), the Pao-t’ang doxography compiled in the late eighth century, and appears to derive from a passage in the *Lotus Sūtra* (*Miao-fa lien-hua ching*, *T* 262.9.12c14–15). The entire sentence appears also in the biography of the Korean Sōn monk, Sunji (fl. 858); see *Chodang chip* 20, p. 356c24–25. This exchange explains, according to Wōnhyo, the practices by which the hindrances are overcome (in technical terms, the “counteracting path,” or *pratipakṣamārga*) and realization catalyzed. There are two benefits accruing from eradicating the hindrances. First is the fruition of bodhi, which transcends the five skandhas; in such an achievement, “one sits at the *bodhimāṇḍa* and gains supreme enlightenment; hence the statement ‘one will sit supernally on the open ground.’ Second, one realizes nirvāṇa via this supreme enlightenment. One’s en-

Muju Bodhisattva remarked, “The mind that gains nirvāṇa is isolated and autonomous. Lingering perpetually in nirvāṇa, [the mind] perforce is liberated.”

The Buddha responded, “Lingering perpetually in nirvāṇa is the bondage of nirvāṇa. Why is this? Nirvāṇa is the inspiration of original enlightenment, and that inspiration is originally nirvāṇa. The enlightened aspects (*bodhy-āṅga*) of nirvāṇa are in fact the aspects of original enlightenment. As the enlightened nature is undifferentiated, nirvāṇa is undifferentiated. As enlightenment is originally unproduced, nirvāṇa is unproduced. As enlightenment is originally free from extinction, nirvāṇa is free from extinction. Because nirvāṇa is innate, there is no attainment of nirvāṇa. And if nirvāṇa cannot be attained, then how can one linger therein?

“Oh son of good family! One who is enlightened need not linger in nirvāṇa. Why is this? Enlightenment originally is unproduced; it is far removed from the maculations (*mala*) of sentient beings. Enlightenment is originally free of calmness; it is far removed from the agitation of nirvāṇa [i.e., the presumption that there is a process by which nirvāṇa is achieved]. The mind of one who lingers at such a stage lingers nowhere. Free from both egress and access, it accesses the *amala*-consciousness.”

Muju Bodhisattva asked, “If the *amala*-consciousness has some place where it can be accessed, [369a] [does this mean it is] something that is attained—that is, an attained dharma?”

The Buddha replied, “No, it does not. Why is this? It is like a deluded son who carries gold coins in his hands, but does not know that he has them. Roaming throughout all the ten directions, he passes fifty years in poverty and destitution, hardship and suffering. Though he devotes all his efforts to eeking out a living, he is unable to support himself. Seeing his son in such dire straits, his father tells him, ‘You’re carrying around gold coins! Why don’t you use them? Then you’ll be free to satisfy your needs in every possible way.’ His son awakens and discovers the gold coins. His mind greatly joyous, he shouts, ‘I found the gold coins!’ His father replies, ‘My deluded son! You should not be elated [at your good fortune]. The gold coins you’ve found have always been in your possession; they are not something you’ve “found.” So how can you be happy?’⁴³

lightened understanding will then be free from [any semblance of] enlightenment and all the consciousnesses will access [nirvāṇa]; hence the statement ‘the consciousnesses and skandhas [will be in a state of] *parinirvāṇa*’ ” KSGR 2, p. 980a7–25.

⁴³ As Liebenthal (p. 363 n. 3) notes, attempts to trace this simile to the allegory of the compassionate father and his ignorant sons in the *Lotus Sūtra* are dubious. Liebenthal instead proposes to trace it to a simile in the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra* (*Ta-pan-nieh-p’an ching* 24, T 374.12.510b1)

“Oh son of good family! It is just the same with the *amala*-consciousness. It originally is not something from which you have departed. It is not something that has now been accessed. Even though in the past you were unaware of it, it was not nonexistent. Even though now you have awakened to it, it is not accessed.”

Muju Bodhisattva asked, “If that father knew his son was deluded, why did he wait until [his son] had spent fifty years roaming throughout the ten directions in poverty and destitution, hardship and suffering, before he told him [about the gold coins he was carrying]?”

The Buddha replied, “The passage of fifty years is but the agitation of a single moment of thought. Roaming throughout the ten directions is but the fantasy of distant travel.”⁴⁴

Muju Bodhisattva asked, “What is ‘the agitation of a single moment of thought?’”

The Buddha replied, “The five skandhas all arise in the action of a single moment of thought.⁴⁵ In the arising of the five skandhas all fifty evils are contained.”⁴⁶

about a destitute person who finds a diamond (= adamant), though I am not entirely convinced by this suggestion. Wōnhyo treats this passage as a simile for the delusion of any sentient being (“a deluded son”), whose grasping at defilements obscures the original purity of his mind (“carries gold coins in his hands, but does not know that he has them”). The buddhas are able to arouse resolute faith (*adhimukti*) in such a being through the Mahāyāna teachings (“You’re carrying around gold coins!”), and finally that being is able to access the first *bhūmi* (“[he] discovers the gold coins”). But he then grasps at the achievement of that state (“I found the gold coins!”), which the buddhas must counter by admonishing him, “The gold coins you’ve found have always been in your possession; they are not something you’ve ‘found.’ So how can you be happy?” *KSGR* 2, pp. 980c23–981a23. See also Chu-chen’s explanation in *T’ung-tsung chi* 6, p. 260a.

⁴⁴ The translation is tentative. Rhī’s rendering (*Kūmgang sammaegyōng-ron*, p. 153), “One imagines this while assuming that there is nothing that is far off,” seems hardly plausible. Neither Wōnhyo, Yūan-ch’eng, nor Chu-chen provides any gloss on the phrase that might guide the translation. Might this phrase have something to do with the (mistaken) belief that practice has to continue through a complex series of steps? Or perhaps it is intended simply to imply a spatial interpenetration to complement the temporal interpenetration expressed in the preceding line.

⁴⁵ “The purpose here is to explain that the four marks [*samskṛtalakṣaṇa*; of production, subsistence, decay, and extinction] that are contained in a single moment of thought include all of birth and death.” *KSGR* 2, p. 981b24–25.

⁴⁶ These fifty evils comprise a rather complex list, based on different dharmas associated with the five skandhas. Wōnhyo explains that the consciousness skandha has eight evils: the eight consciousnesses. Both feeling and perception skandhas have eight apiece: the mental states (*caitta*) associated with mind (*cittasamprayukta*). The formations skandha has nine: eight that are *cittasamprayukta* and one that is dissociated from mind (*cittaviprayukta*). The form skandha has seventeen: four great elements, thirteen derivative elements (five sense-bases, five sense-objects,

Muju Bodhisattva asked, “The fantasy of distant travel and roaming throughout the ten directions—both these arise in a single moment of thought and include all the fifty evils. How can one prompt those sentient beings not to give rise to a single thought [so that the fifty evils will not arise]?”

The Buddha replied, “One should prompt those sentient beings to sit with their minds and spirits calm, abiding in the adamant stage. Once thoughts are tranquillized so that nothing is produced, the mind will be constantly calm and serene. This is what is meant by the absence of even a single thought.”⁴⁷

Muju Bodhisattva said, “This is inconceivable. When one is enlightened to the fact that thoughts are unproduced, one’s mind becomes calm and serene. That is the inspiration of original enlightenment. That inspiration is motionless; it exists in perpetuity and is not nonexistent. But this does not mean that it is not nonexistent, or that there is nothing to which it is not enlightened. Awakening to the knowledge that there is no enlightenment is the original inspiration and original enlightenment. Enlightenment is pure and immaculate, perdurable and unchanging, because its nature is fixed. It is inconceivable!”

The Buddha replied, “So it is.”

After Muju Bodhisattva heard these words, he gained what he had never had before and recited gāthās:

The Lord is the Lord of Great Enlightenment,
He explains the dharma that produces no-thought,

and three kinds of *rūpa* included in the *dharmadhātu*). These make a total of fifty, which are called evil “because they all flow counter to *nirvāṇa*, and because they are in opposition to the genuine goodness of *nirvāṇa*.” *KSGR* 2, pp. 981b25–981c4.

⁴⁷ Chu-chen (*T’ung-tsung chi* 6, p. 260c) construes this paragraph as presenting the major meditation technique of *VS*. He also relates it to various passages in Ch’an writings attributed to Bodhidharma, Seng-ts’an, and Hui-neng to illustrate its affinities with Ch’an praxis

Wōnhyo here finishes his outline of the process of actualized enlightenment with a treatment of the experiences forthcoming through consummating one’s practice. “Those sentient beings” are those ordinary persons who have not yet attained the ten faiths, the preliminary stage of the path. “Sit with their minds and spirits calm” refers to the completion of the ten abidings, the actual inception of the *mārga*. “Abiding in the adamant stage” is the first *bhūmi* on up, where one realizes the *dharmakāya*. “Once thoughts are tranquillized so that nothing is produced” is the inception of the stage of sublime enlightenment. “The mind will be constantly calm and serene” is the access to the sublime-enlightenment stage, where one gains a vision of the fountainhead of the mind, which is free from production and extinction. *KSGR* 2, p. 981c7–16.

The mind that is free of thoughts and is unproduced,
That mind endures in perpetuity and is never extinguished.
The inspirations of one enlightenment and original enlightenment,
Inspire all those who are endowed with original enlightenment.
It is like he who [recovered] gold coins,
But what he recovered was in fact not recovered at all.

At that time, the congregation heard these words and all gained *prajñā-pāramitā*, which is the inspiration of original enlightenment.

Chapter Five

Approaching the Edge of Reality

[369b1] At that point, the Tathāgata made this statement:⁴⁸ “All bodhisattvas, and the rest [of the congregation], who have been deeply affected by the original inspiration, are sentient beings who are worthy of salvation. If later,⁴⁹ during an inappropriate time,⁵⁰ one were to preach the dharma accordingly, it would be neither timely nor beneficial. Speech that is neither accordant nor discordant,⁵¹ neither identical nor different,⁵² would be speech that accords with thusness. [Such speech] guides all affective knowledge so that it flows into the sea of *sarvajñā* [all-knowledge]. It prevents the assembly that is capable [of salvation] from being swept away⁵³ by the empty breeze

⁴⁸ According to Wōnhyo, this chapter explains the absolute, true-thusness aspect of the one mind, complementing the phenomenal aspect, which was covered in the preceding chapter. I ask the reader’s patience during the portions of this chapter that bracket the discussion of the two accesses and guarding the one. The extant recensions seem corrupt here and their readings are often difficult to render intelligibly. I have relied heavily on Wōnhyo’s exegesis in attempting to bring some sense to these sections, but not always with the greatest success. It appears to me that much of this chapter is intended to provide a medium in which to embed these two Ch’an teachings, and little more.

⁴⁹ That is, after the Buddha’s *parinirvāṇa*; after the end of the orthodox-dharma age; or during the last, and most degenerate, of the five five-hundred-year periods leading up to the demise of Buddhism. *KSGR* 2, p. 982b29–c1.

⁵⁰ When beings are neither innocent nor mature; when enlightenment does not come easily; and when heterodox views are rampant. *KSGR* 2, p. 982c2–3.

⁵¹ “Accordant” means speech that accords with the principle. “Discordant” means speech that obstructs the production of faith. To avoid any potential clinging to the principle or any obstruction of right faith, one should use “speech that is neither accordant nor discordant” *KSGR* 2, p. 982c6–11.

⁵² “Identical” means to speak in accordance with the view that existence is real, creating a “difference” with the view that voidness is real. Since such identities and differences only exacerbate doctrinal controversies, one should speak in a way that is “neither identical nor different.” *KSGR* 2, p. 982c11–15.

⁵³ A free rendering for the logograph *ūp* (“to pour”, “to extract”). Wōnhyo glosses it by

[of the sense realms] and prompts them to aspire for⁵⁴ the spiritual cavern,⁵⁵ which has but a single taste [because it is calm and equanimous].

“The world is not the world; an abiding place [nirvāṇa] is not a refuge. In withdrawing from or accessing the five voidnesses [*infrā*], [one who has realized voidness] neither clings to nor rejects anything. Why is this? All dharmas are marked by voidness. The dharma nature is not nonexistent, but that which lacks nonexistence [i.e., the principle of the dharma nature] is not nonexistent [in that it is not rejected by the practitioner] and that which is not nonexistent is not existent [for it is not clung to by the practitioner]. As it has no fixed nature, it does not linger in either existence or nonexistence. Neither ordinary nor sanctified knowledge is distressed by existence or nonexistence.⁵⁶

“Once all you bodhisattvas, and everyone else, are aware of this inspiration, you will attain bodhi.”⁵⁷

At that time there was a bodhisattva in the assembly named Taeryōk [Great Power; Mahābala]. Arising from his seat, he came before the Buddha and addressed him, saying: “Lord! As you have said, ‘In withdrawing from or accessing the five voidnesses, one neither clings to nor rejects anything.’ How is it that there is no clinging or rejection with regard to these five voidnesses?”

The Buddha replied, “Bodhisattva! The five voidnesses are: [1] the three realms of existence are void; [2] the shadows [i.e., the karmic effects] of the six destinies [hell-denzens, animals, hungry ghosts, humans, aśuras, and gods] are void; [3] the characteristics of dharmas [the four *samskṛtalakṣaṇas* of production, subsistence, decay, and extinction] are void; [4] names and characteristics are void; [5] the objects of the mind and consciousnesses are

ch'im (“measuring”, “conjecture”), and says that it has the meaning of grasping. *KSGR* 2, p. 982c24–25.

⁵⁴ Following Wōnhyo’s interpretation of the logograph *sō* (“multitude,” “nearly”), which he glosses as *hūmang* (“hope,” “aspiration”). *KSGR* 2, p. 982c28

⁵⁵ Following the Wōnhyo and K’ai-pao recensions; Koryō II/Taishō replaces *kong* (“cavern”) with the near-homographic *yu* (“milk”), which might be better considering its characterization as having a single taste. See *VS*, p. 369b5 n. 5. Wōnhyo explains: “‘Spiritual cavern’ refers to the cave of spiritually perfected beings, which is far away from the cities, an uneventful place of tranquillity and longevity. It is a simile for great nirvāṇa, the immortal refuge.” *KSGR* 2, pp. 982c28–983a1.

⁵⁶ Following the K’ai-pao and Three Editions reading *VS*, p. 369 n. 7.

⁵⁷ “If a bodhisattva who has yet to achieve the *bhūmis* knows that the dharma nature is neither existent nor nonexistent, he will then attain full enlightenment at the moment of the generation of the thought [of enlightenment; *bodhicittotpāda*].” *KSGR* 2, p. 983a25–26.

void.⁵⁸ Bodhisattva! These kinds of voidness may be void but they do not linger in voidness, for voidness is not marked by voidness. And how can dharmas that are signless involve either clinging or rejection? Accessing that place which is free from clinging is identical to accessing the three voidnesses.”

Taeryök Bodhisattva asked, “What are the three voidnesses?”

The Buddha replied, “The three voidnesses are: [1] the characteristic of voidness is also void; [2] the voidness of voidness is also void; [3] that which is voided is also void.⁵⁹ These kinds of voidness do not subsist in the three characteristics,⁶⁰ and they are not devoid of true reality [because they lead to the revelation of what is real]. Eradicating the pathways of words and speech is inconceivable.”

Taeryök Bodhisattva said, “If they ‘are not devoid of true reality,’ then it must be assumed that they do in fact exist.”

The Buddha retorted, “Nonexistence does not linger in nonexistence. Existence does not linger in existence.⁶¹ Neither is nonexistent or existent. A nonexistent dharma does not in fact linger in nonexistence. A characteristic that is not nonexistent does not in fact linger in existence. One may not refer successfully to the principle in terms of either existence or nonexistence.

“Bodhisattva! That characteristic which has neither name or meaning is inconceivable. Why is this? The name that is nameless is not without name; the meaning that is meaningless is not without meaning.”

Taeryök Bodhisattva said, “Such names and meanings are true and are characterized by thusness; they are the tathāgatas’ characteristic of thusness. Thusness does not linger in thusness: thusness has no characteristic of thus-

⁵⁸ According to Wōnhyo, the first two of the five types of voidness are intended to counter the deception that phenomenal objects, which are the objects of clinging, are real; the latter three are designed to counter the deceptions produced by the consciousnesses that are the catalysts for that clinging. *KSGR* 2, p. 983b26–29.

⁵⁹ According to Wōnhyo, the first of these three types of voidness shows that rejecting the reality of mundane objects (“characteristic of voidness”) is in turn to be rejected as well, thereby reconciling absolute truth with conventional truth. The second type suggests that descriptions of existence or nonexistence made according to conventional truth are also to be rejected; this reconciles conventional truth with absolute truth. The last demonstrates that both of the two preceding accounts of the significance of voidness are also void; this fuses both conventional and absolute truths into a single truth and reveals the one *dharmadhātu* (*il pōpkye*), which is the one mind. *KSGR* 2, p. 983c8–26.

⁶⁰ Wōnhyo glosses the three characteristics as conventional, absolute, and neither; *KSGR* 2, p. 983c27–28.

⁶¹ This line is omitted in the Wōnhyo and K’ai-pao recensions; *VS*, p. 396b19 n. 9.

ness, because its characteristic is to be free from thusness. [But] it is not that it has not ‘come thusly’ [= *tathāgata*]. As far as the mental characteristics of sentient beings are concerned, those characteristics are identical to the *tathāgata*. Hence, the minds of sentient beings should also be free from any discrete sense realms.”

The Buddha said, “So it is. The minds of sentient beings are actually free from any discrete sense realms. Why is that? It is because the mind is originally pure, and the principle unsullied. It is due to being soiled by the dust [of sensory objects] that [this world] comes to be called the three realms of existence. The mind that is involved in these three realms of existence comes to be called the discrete sense realms. These sense realms are empty and false, and are projections of the mind. If the mind is free from deception, there then will be no discrete sense realms.”⁶²

Taeryōk Bodhisattva remarked, “If the mind [369c] remains pure, no sense objects will arise. When this mind is pure, the three realms of existence will perforce no longer exist.”⁶³

The Buddha responded, “So it is, Bodhisattva! If the mind does not produce sense objects, those sense objects will not produce mind. Why is this? All visible objects are nothing but the mind that sees them. If the mind does not illusorily project them, there will be no visual objects.

“Bodhisattva! If sentient beings have no existence internally and the three natures [internal, external, and medial] are void and calm, there then will be no personal aggregation [viz., things involving oneself] or impersonal aggregation [viz., things separate from oneself]. Even the two accesses will also not produce mind. For one who has been so inspired, there will then be no three realms of existence.”⁶⁴

⁶² “The mind is originally pure, and the principle unsullied” represents original enlightenment. “Soiled by the dust [of sensory objects, this world] comes to be called the three realms of existence” represents the common state of unenlightenment. “If the mind is free from deception, there then will be no discrete sense realms”: this represents the stage of the actualized enlightenment, which takes one from unenlightenment back to original enlightenment. *KSGR* 2, p. 984c6–15.

⁶³ “‘When this mind is pure, the three realms of existence will perforce no longer exist’: [Bodhisattvas] from the first *bhūmi* onward have a realization of original purity; therefore, in accordance with their attainment, the three realms of existence vanish. The phenomenal characteristics of the three realms vanish on the first *bhūmi* or, alternatively, the eighth *bhūmi*. The own-nature of the three realms vanishes at the stage of equal enlightenment. The habit-energies (*vāsanā*) of the three realms vanish only on attaining the stage of sublime enlightenment.” *KSGR* 2, p. 984c22–26.

⁶⁴ “‘If sentient beings have no existence internally’: this is because on the level of the ten abidings, one realizes the voidness of the internal sense of self (*pudgala*). ‘The three natures are

Taeryök Bodhisattva asked, “What is meant by your statement, ‘the two accesses will also not produce mind’? The mind is originally unproduced; so how can there be an access to it?”

The Buddha replied, “There are two accesses: the first is called the access of principle (*iip*); the second is called the access of practice (*haengnip*). Access of principle means one has deep faith that sentient beings are not different from the true nature, and thus are neither identical nor counterpoised.⁶⁵ [This true nature] is obscured and obstructed merely by adventitious sense objects. Without either going or coming, one abides frozen in attentive contemplation (*ŭngju kakkwan*).⁶⁶ One contemplates according to truth (*ch’egwan*) that the buddha-nature is neither existent nor nonexistent. It is neither self nor others and is no different in either ordinary person or sage. One abides firmly without wavering in the state of the adamantine mind,

void and calm’: this is because on the level of the ten practices, one realizes the voidness of the internal dharmas ‘There then will be no personal aggregation or impersonal aggregation’: this is because at the level of the ten transferences, one gains the equanimous voidness which rejects totally all such personal and impersonal aggregations, or persons and dharmas.” *KSGR* 2, p. 985a4–7.

⁶⁵ “Counterpoised” (*kong*) may be a mistake for “different” (*i*), the top portion of the latter logograph somehow having been deleted. This emendation is not corroborated in any of the recensions, however.

⁶⁶ “Attentive contemplation” (*kakkwan*) replaces Bodhidharma’s renowned, but problematic, term, “wall contemplation” (*pi-kuan*). The precise denotation of this term as used in *VS* is somewhat unclear, since *kakkwan* (Ch *chüeh-kuan*) as the *dvandva* “attention and contemplation” is the equivalent in older Chinese translations of “thought and imagination” (*vitarkavicāra*)—the scourge of any meditation deeper than the first *dhyāna*. Wōnhyo’s interpretation seeks to give the term a rather more salutary connotation, taking it as “attention and examination” or “attentive examination” (*kakch’al*; Ch. *chüeh-ch’a*), adopting the rendering of *vitarkavicāra* used in the translation of the *Lañkāvatāra*; see discussion in Mizuno, p. 53, and for the *Lañkāvatāra*’s translation of *vitarkavicāra* as *chüeh-kuan*, see Suzuki, *Studies*, p. 442 ad loc. All in all, *VS*’s gloss seems to suggest that “wall contemplation” is a form of detached, but nevertheless vigilant awareness, in which the adept remains constantly focussed on the utter ineffability of the buddha-nature. This is extremely close, as we shall see, to *VS*’s interpretation of “guarding the one.”

There is also an interesting allusion in Hui-ssu’s (515–576) *Sui-tzu-i san-mei* to a type of *samādhi* that combines the *vajrasamādhi* and wall contemplation. This is the “adamantine-wall *samādhi*” (*chin-kang-pi ting san-mei*). Hui-ssu’s explication of this *samādhi* draws on the same *Āgama* story of Śāriputra’s attack by a demon that we mentioned in treating the *vajrasamādhi* in part 1, chapter 3. The power of the *vajrasamādhi* (what Hui-ssu terms instead “adamantine-wall *samādhi*”) was such that Śāriputra was completely unaware he had been struck a deadly blow over the head by a demon, illustrating that *samādhi*’s ability to leave one totally senseless to the external world. Somewhat the same connotation is brought out in the reference to “abiding frozen” in either “wall contemplation” or “attentive contemplation” in the two corresponding passages of *VS* and *Erh-ju ssu-hsing lun*. See *Sui-tzu-i san-mei* 1, ZZ 1, 98, 350d–51a; discussed in Jorgensen, “*Long Scroll*,” p. 194, and McRae, p. 306 n. 21.

calm, quiet, inactive, and free from discrimination. This is called the access of principle.

“The access of practice means that the mind has no bias or inclination; its shadows [the sense objects] are free from flux. Wherever [the mind] finds itself, its tranquil thoughts seek nothing. It is not buffeted by the winds [of the sense realms], and [remains still] like the great earth. It rejects [any notions of] mind and self and rescues sentient beings. It is not subject to production, has no characteristics, and is free from both clinging and rejection.

“Bodhisattva! The mind [that has realized the principle] is free from either egress or access. As the mind that is free from either egress or access accesses without accessing anything, I therefore referred to ‘access.’

“Bodhisattva! The characteristic of that dharma which in this wise accesses the dharma is not void; and the dharma that is not void—that dharma is not frivolously discarded. Why is this? Those dharmas which are not non-existent are replete with all meritorious qualities. They are neither mind nor its shadows; they are naturally (*niyati*) pure.”

Taeryōk Bodhisattva asked, “What is meant by this statement ‘they are neither mind nor its shadows; they are naturally pure?’”

The Buddha replied, “The dharma that is void and thus is neither one of the dharmas of mind and consciousness [i.e., the eight consciousnesses], nor one of the dharmas that drive the mind [i.e., the six classes of mental concomitants (*caitta*)]. That dharma is not marked by voidness. That dharma is not marked by materiality. That dharma is not one of the dharmas dissociated from mind (*cittaviprayuktasaṃskāra*). It is not a dharma that accords with the unconditioned quality of the mind. It is neither a shadow that is cast [viz., a sense-object projected by the mind] nor [the mind] that projects [sense objects]. It has no nature of its own and is not discrete. It is neither name, characteristic, nor object (*artha*). Why is this? Because [that dharma] is thus.

“Those dharmas that are not thus also do not lack thusness and [dharmas] that do not exist do not lack thusness. But it is wrong [to claim that] there exists [any dharma] that lacks thusness.⁶⁷ Why is this? The dharma of the fundamental principle is neither principle nor fundamental. It is far removed from all controversy and manifests no characteristics.

“Bodhisattva! The production of this sort of pure dharma is not produced by production [for its essence is unproduced]; its extinction is not extinguished by nonextinction [for its essence is unextinguished].”

⁶⁷ The translation of these two sentences is tentative. Wōnhyō’s interpretation seeks to force exactly the opposite sense from the passage *KSGR* 2, p. 968a7–9.

Taeryök Bodhisattva remarked, “This is inconceivable! Such characteristics of dharmas are produced neither in combination [i.e., they are not mind or mental characteristics, which are always produced in association with each other] nor independently [for they have no own-nature and are not differentiated]. They are neither bridled [for they are neither name nor object] nor bound [for they are not associated with the senses]. They are neither amassed [viz., materiality] nor scattered [viz., voidness]. They are neither produced nor extinguished. They are free from any characteristic of either coming or going. This is inconceivable!”

The Buddha said, “So it is. It is inconceivable. The inconceivable mind—that mind is also thus. Why is this? Thusness is not [370a] different from the mind, for the mind is originally thus.

“Sentient beings and the buddha-nature are neither one nor different. The natures of sentient beings are originally free from both production and extinction. This nature of production and extinction—that nature is originally nirvāṇa. The nature [of sentient beings] and the characteristics [of production and extinction] are originally thus, for thusness is motionless.

“No characteristics of dharmas are generated by conditions, for the nature of this characteristic of generation (*utpādalakṣaṇa*) is to be thus and motionless. The characteristics of conditionality—those characteristics are originally void and nonexistent. As each and every condition is void, there is no conditioned generation (*pratītyasamutpāda*). All conditioned dharmas are the illusory visions of the deluded mind. Their appearance is originally unproduced, since the conditions [that produce them] are originally nonexistent. The thusness of the mind, that principle of dharma—its self-essence is void and nonexistent. It is like ‘King Space,’⁶⁸ which originally has no abode; the minds of ordinary people wrongly perceive [all-encompassing space] as differentiated [into this space and that space].

“That characteristic of thusness originally neither exists nor does not exist. The characteristics of existence and nonexistence are perceived only by the mind and consciousness. Bodhisattva! So too is it with the nature of the mind: it is not devoid of self-essence, but that self-essence is [also] not existent, for nonexistence is actually not nonexistent. Bodhisattva! Those characteristics of both nonexistence and not nonexistence are not part of the stage of speech and language. Why is this? The dharma of true thusness is

⁶⁸ “‘King Space’ is the so-called dharma of space, which is the support of all materiality, in the same way that a king is the support of all his subjects. Hence, space is said to be King Space.” KSGR 2, p. 986c9–11

empty, vacant, and signless. It is not something that may be reached by dualities⁶⁹ [such as thought and imagination (*vitarkavicāra*)].

“The realm of emptiness cannot be fathomed by either those inside or outside [the Buddhist religion]. Only a master of the six practices may come to know of them.”

Taeryōk Bodhisattva asked, “What are these six practices? I beg of you to explain them.”

The Buddha replied, “First is the practice of the ten faiths. Second is the practice of the ten abidings. Third is the practice of the ten practices. Fourth is the practice of the ten transferences. Fifth is the practice of the ten *bhūmis*. Sixth is the practice of equal enlightenment. One who practices these sorts of practices may then come to know [the realm of emptiness].”⁷⁰

Taeryōk Bodhisattva asked, “The enlightened inspiration of the edge of reality has neither egress nor access. Through what sort of dharma or thought does one approach the edge of reality?”

The Buddha replied, “The dharma of the edge of reality—that dharma has no limit. The mind that is limitless thence approaches the edge of reality.”

Taeryōk Bodhisattva asked, “The knowledge of this limitless mind—that knowledge is boundless. The boundless mind—that mind gains autonomy. Autonomous knowledge gains access to the edge of reality. This is also the case for ordinary persons, feeble-minded sentient beings—that is, those whose minds are subject to severe panting (*ch’ōn*).⁷¹ Through what dharma may they control that [panting], steady their minds, and gain access to the edge of reality?”

⁶⁹ Following the Wōnhyo and K’ai-pao recensions. Koryō II/Taishō has “it is not reached by two-vehicle [adherents],” which is also plausible; *VS*, p. 370a11 n. 2.

⁷⁰ This is the expanded outline of the *mārga* as found in such Chinese apocryphal compositions as *P’u-sa ying-lo pen-yeh ching*, *Fan-wang ching*, and *Jen-wang ching*; Wōnhyo himself notes that the outline of this *mārga* comes from *P’u-sa ying-lo pen-yeh ching* and its full explication appears in *Avatamsaka-sūtra*. He then correlates the first four stages of this *mārga* (the ten faiths through the ten transferences) with the access of principle and the latter two (the ten *bhūmis* and equal enlightenment) with the access of practice. *KSGR* 2, p. 987a16–18.

⁷¹ Wōnhyo: “The panting (*ch’ōn/ch’uan*) of the mind’ the mind that is startled is not at rest, and one’s inhalations and exhalations become extremely rapid: this is ‘panting.’ It is used as a simile for the agitation of the six [sensory] consciousnesses, which are never at rest.” *KSGR* 2, p. 987b16–17. See also Yuan-ch’eng’s comments (*Chu-chieh* 3, p. 208a), who seeks to trace the idea of “panting” to the *Lañkāvatāra-sūtra*. “Panting” appears commonly in early Chinese translations of *dhyāna* texts. One of An Shih-kaō’s translations associates panting with the rapid breath that accompanies the onset of the dying process; see *Ma-i ching*, *T* 732.17.533b14. Panting is also equated with distracted thought in Chu Fa-hu’s translations; see *Fa-kuan ching*, *T* 611.15.241a24.

The Buddha replied, “Bodhisattva! This panting of the mind is driven both internally [by the sense of self that is a product of the *kliṣṭamanovijñāna*] and externally [by the sense realms]. [The defilements (*kleśa*)] flow along following those impulsions, until their drips [their manifestations (*samudācāra*)] become a sea. The heavenly⁷² winds [of the passions] buffet [the sea of the proclivities (*anuśaya*) creating] the waves [of the seven consciousnesses], thereby startling the great dragon [of ignorance]. Because the mind is startled and alarmed, one begins to pant severely.⁷³

“Bodhisattva! One should urge those sentient beings to preserve the three and guard the one, in order to access the tathāgatadhyaṇa.⁷⁴ Due to this concentrated absorption, their minds will come to be free of panting.”

Taeryōk Bodhisattva asked, “What do you mean by ‘preserve the three and guard the one, in order to access the tathāgatadhyaṇa?’”

The Buddha replied, “‘Preserve the three’ means to preserve the three liberations. ‘Guard the one’ means to guard the thusness of the one mind. ‘Access the tathāgatadhyaṇa’ means the noumenal contemplation (*igwan*) on the thusness of the mind. Accessing such a state is in fact what is meant by approaching the edge of reality.”

Taeryōk Bodhisattva asked, “What exactly are these three liberations? Through what dharma may one enter this noumenal-contemplation *samādhi*?”

The Buddha replied, “The three liberations are void liberation, adamant liberation, and *prajñā* liberation. The mind that engages in noumenal contemplation means that once the mind [370b] is pure in accordance with the principle, there is then nothing that cannot be the mind.”

Taeryōk Bodhisattva asked, “How do you perform this act of preservation? How does one contemplate it?”

The Buddha answered, “Preservation is put into operation when mind and objects are nondual. Whether withdrawing from or accessing internal or external practices, [these remain] nondual.⁷⁵ One does not dwell on any

⁷² Following Wōnhyo’s reading (*KSGR* 2, p. 987b13). All other editions read the near-homograph *tae* (“great”) for *ch’ōn* (“heavenly”); see *VS*, p. 370a22.

⁷³ The glosses for this simile are drawn from Wōnhyo; *KSGR* 2, p. 987b.

⁷⁴ The last, and most profound, of the four types of *dhyāna* mentioned in the *Lankāvatāra-sūtra*, in which the person is able to go out into the world to aid sentient beings while still maintaining the full depth of his concentration; see *Leng-ch’ieh ching* 2, T 670.16.492a22–24; *Ta-sheng ju Leng-ch’ieh ching* 3, T 672.16.602a12; Suzuki, trans., pp. 85–86; it is discussed in Suzuki, *Studies*, pp. 367–68.

⁷⁵ “‘Internal practice’ is the practice of calm radiance, which is generated through accessing contemplation. ‘External practice’ is the practice of transforming objects, which occurs through withdrawing from contemplation. Whether withdrawing or accessing, one does not

particular characteristic and the mind is free from gain or loss. The mind, purified, flows freely into the one-and-many *bhūmi*.⁷⁶ [All of] this is what is meant by ‘contemplate it.’

“Bodhisattva! Such a person does not linger over any dualistic characteristics. Although he does not go forth into homelessness (*pravrajita*) he is no longer part of the household. For this reason, while he does not wear the dharma-robles and neither observes all the Prātimokṣa precepts [monk’s disciplinary rules] nor participates in the Poṣada [fortnightly religious observance], he does not engage in personal licentiousness in his own mind and obtains the fruition of sainthood. He does not linger over either of the two vehicles but accesses the bodhisattva path. Subsequently he will complete all the *bhūmis* and attain the bodhi of the buddhas.”

Taeryōk Bodhisattva remarked, “This is inconceivable! Even though such a person has not gone forth into homelessness, he cannot but have gone forth. Why is this? He has entered the domicile of nirvāṇa, where he dons the robe of the tathāgatas and sits on the bodhi-seat (*bodhimaṇḍa*). Such a person should be worshipped respectfully even by śramaṇas [religious mendicants].”

The Buddha said, “So it is. Why is this? Accessing the domicile of nirvāṇa, the mind transcends⁷⁷ the three realms of existence.⁷⁸ Donning the robe of the tathāgatas, he accesses the site of the voidness of dharmas. Seated on the bodhi-seat, he ascends to the unique⁷⁹ *bhūmi* of right enlightenment. The mind of such a person transcends the two types of [belief in] selfhood

lose the middle way: hence, the statement ‘[these remain] nondual.’ This is as has been explained in the ‘Ten Transferences’ section of the *Pen-yeh ching*.” *KSGR* 2, p. 988b4–6. For the passage from the *P’u-sa ying-lo pen-yeh ching*, see *T* 1485.24.1014a7–14.

⁷⁶ “‘The-one-and-many [lit., ‘one-and-not-one’] *bhūmi*’: this is an alternate name for the first *bhūmi*. This is because the first *bhūmi* is in fact the ten *bhūmis*, for in one moment one may suddenly access the ten types of *dharmadhātus*. The ten *bhūmis* are in fact the first *bhūmi*, for they may all be directly accessed through this initial gate [of the first *bhūmi*]. Owing to the fact that the ten *bhūmis* are in fact the first *bhūmi*, [the first *bhūmi*] is called the ‘one.’ But because the first *bhūmi* is in fact the ten *bhūmis*, it is ‘many.’ Consequently, [the first *bhūmi*] is called the ‘one-and-many *bhūmi*.’” *KSGR* 2, p. 988b19–23.

⁷⁷ Following the Koryō II/Taishō reading; no alternate readings are given by the Taishō editors. Wōnhyo’s recension reads *ki* (“to activate”) for *wōl* (“to transcend”). *KSGR* 2, p. 988c14.

⁷⁸ Liebenenthal (p. 366 and n. 2) traces this phrase to allusions in Paramārtha’s translation of *Shih-pa-k’ung lun* (*T* 1616), though I believe the page and line numbers are miscited; apparently, he means to refer to *T* 1616.31 861c28, 862a1.

⁷⁹ Lit., “single” (*il*). This work is missing in the Koryō II/Taishō recension and is added following the Wōnhyo, K’ai-pao, and Three Editions; *VS*, p. 370b13 n. 11.

[i.e., believing in the selfhood of the individual person and of dharmas]. So why wouldn't the śramaṇas worship him respectfully?"

Taeryōk Bodhisattva remarked, "Adherents of the two vehicles do not see such a unique *bhūmi* or the sea of voidness."

The Buddha responded, "So it is. Two-vehicle adherents savor samādhi, and gain the samādhi-body [i.e., they are attached to the trance of extinction (*nirodhasamāpatti*)]. With regard to that unique *bhūmi* and the sea of voidness, they become like alcoholics who stay drunk and never sober up. Continuing through numerous kalpas [eons], they remain unable to gain enlightenment. But once the liquor has worn off and they finally awaken, they will then be able to cultivate these practices and eventually gain the body of a buddha.⁸⁰ From the moment that such a person abandons the [status of] *icchāntika* [a person who is blocked from attaining enlightenment], he may access the six practices. On those stages of practice, his mind is purified in a single moment of thought and he gains absolute clarity and brightness. The power of his adamant knowledge renders him *avaivartaka* [not subject to spiritual retrogression]. He ferries sentient beings across to liberation and has inexhaustible friendliness and compassion."⁸¹

Taeryōk Bodhisattva said, "But such a person would not need to maintain the codes of morality and thus should be reproached by the śramaṇas."

The Buddha replied, "I explain moral codes to you because of your unwholesome actions and haughtiness, and because of the waves and swells [the first seven consciousnesses, which disturb the calm surface] of the sea [the innate purity of the mind]. Once the mind-ground [has realized the voidness of dharmas], its sea of the eighth consciousness is limpid and the flow of its ninth consciousness is pure. The winds [of the sense realms] cannot buffet them, so waves and swells do not arise."⁸²

"The nature of the moral codes is equanimous and void; [the śrāvakas]

⁸⁰ This simile is adapted from *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra*: "It is like a drunkard, / Whose liquor wearing off, later awakens, / He gains the supreme essence of buddhahood, / Which is my true dharma-body." (*Ju Leng-ch'ieh ching* 4, T 671.16.540b7–8). The Sanskrit is somewhat different (as rendered by Suzuki, trans., p. 116, v. 210): "Like unto the drunkard who, being awakened from his intoxication, regains his intelligence, [the Śrāvakas] will have the realisation of the Buddha's truth, which is his own body."

⁸¹ VS's correlation of the *icchāntika* with two-vehicle adherents who are hopelessly attached to samādhi is without parallel in other scriptures, so far as I am aware. Mahāyāna texts have, however, frequently equated *icchāntikas* with Hīnayānists, as for example *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra*; Suzuki, trans., p. 59. The Mahāyāna conception of *icchāntika* is discussed by Suzuki in his companion volume, *Studies*, pp. 217–21; and see the citations to other Mahāyāna texts in Takasaki Jikidō, *A Study on the Ratnagotravibhāga*, introduction, p. 40, and translation, p. 205.

⁸² Cf. the simile of waves and water in *Ta-sheng ch'i-hsin lun*, T 1666.32.476c.

who hold fast to them are deluded and confused. For a person [who knows the true nature of the precepts], the seventh and sixth [consciousnesses] will not be produced, and all origination [of mind and mental concomitants] ceases [for he achieves] the meditative absorption [engendered by accessing the principle]. Remaining close to the three buddhas [*infra*], he arouses [the thought of] bodhi. His mind, which conforms [with the dharma of the one mind], mysteriously accesses the three [types of] signlessness [for he has perfected the access of practice and has eradicated ignorance]. He deeply reverses the triratna, and does not neglect his dignified demeanor (*īryāpatha*). All of those śramaṇas will have to venerate him!

“Bodhisattva! That humanhearted person will not linger over any worldly dharmas, whether active [leading to rebirth in the heavens of the desire realm] or motionless [leading to rebirth in the form and formless realms]. Rather, he will access the three types of voidness and extinguish the mind that is involved with the three realms of existence.”

Taeryōk Bodhisattva asked, “That virtuous one arouses the thought of bodhi at the sites of the [three] buddhas: that is, [1] the buddha endowed with all meritorious qualities, who has brought to fruition [the process of the actualization of enlightenment]; [2] the tathāgatagarbha-buddha⁸³ [the original enlightenment innate in all sentient beings]; and [3] the corporeal buddha. [370c] He accesses the three codes of morality [see chapter 6 *infra*] but does not linger over their characteristics. He extinguishes all thoughts of the three realms of existence, but does not reside in that calm place. Not forsaking the assembly that is capable [of salvation], he reenters the untamed stage [of ordinary sentient beings]. It is inconceivable!”

At that time, Śāriputra rose from his seat, came forward, and recited these gāthās:

He perfects the sea of prajñā,
And does not dwell in the city of nirvāṇa,
Just as the exotic lotus blossom,
Does not grow in the high plains.⁸⁴
All the buddhas over immeasurable kalpas,

⁸³ The term tathāgatagarbha-buddha appears only in *VS* and another suspected Korean apocryphal composition, *Sōk Mahayōn-ron* (cf. *k.* 10, *T* 1668.32.667c21–22, which reads the “tathāgatagarbha-buddha of original enlightenment”).

⁸⁴ Taken from the *Wei-mo-chieh so-shuo ching* (*Vimalakīrtinirdeśa*) 2, *T* 475.14.549b6; cf. Robert Thurman, trans., *The Holy Teaching of Vimalakīrti*, p. 66. The locus classicus for this metaphor is *Dhammapada* (Pupphavagga), vv. 58, 59.

Did not forsake all the defilements.
 Only after saving the world did they gain [nirvāṇa],
 Like the lotus rising from the mud.
 Just as those six levels of practice,
 Are what are cultivated by the bodhisattvas,
 So too are those three types of voidness,
 The true path to bodhi.
 Whether I now linger [in the tranquillity of nirvāṇa] or not,
 It will be just as the Buddha has explained:
 I will return again to this place whence I came,
 And discard [this body] only after I have completed [all the bodhisattva
 practices].
 Furthermore, I will urge all sentient beings,
 To join with me [in pursuing the same vow] and not remain apart,
 May those who came before or will come afterward,
 All be encouraged to climb to right enlightenment.

At that time, the Buddha proclaimed to Śāriputra: “This is inconceivable! You are certain to complete later on the path to bodhi. Innumerable sentient beings will transcend the sea of birth and death.”

At that time, the great assembly [of Mahāyānists] all awakened to bodhi, and all the lesser assembly [of Hīnayānists] together accessed the sea of the five voidnesses.

Chapter Six

The Voidness of the True Nature

[370c17] At that time, Śāriputra addressed the Buddha, saying: “Lord! The cultivation of the bodhisattva path is free from either names or characteristics. The three [codes of] morality do not demand a dignified demeanor.⁸⁵ How should we receive and keep these [codes] so that we may then preach them to sentient beings? I beg that the Buddha may proclaim this for us, out of his compassion.”

The Buddha replied, “Oh son of good family! May you now listen well, and I will proclaim this for you.

“Oh son of good family! Both wholesome and unwholesome dharmas are projections of the mind. All the sense realms⁸⁶ are but the discriminations of ratiocination and verbalization. Control this [discrimination through] one-pointedness of mind and all conditioning will be brought to an end. Why is this? Oh son of good family! The one [original enlightenment, which is the basis of the three moral codes,] originally is not generated [because it is fundamentally calm and tranquil]. The functioning of the three [moral codes] is inoperative. Abiding in that thus-like principle, the gates leading to the six destinies are closed and the four conditions that accord with thusness become imbued with the three moral codes.”

Śāriputra asked, “How is it that ‘the four conditions that accord with thusness become imbued with the three moral codes?’”

The Buddha replied, “The four conditions are: (1) The condition that keeps [the precepts] through the power of the cessation engendered by analytical consideration (*pratisamṅkhyānirodha*; *t’aengmyōl*); it is the moral code

⁸⁵ This sentence provides the tie in with the statement toward the end of the previous chapter, “He accesses the three codes of morality but does not linger over their characteristics”; *VS*, chap. 5, after n. 83. See discussion at *KSGR* 3, p. 990c8–9.

⁸⁶ Wōnhyo glosses these instead as the six destinies: hell-denzens, hungry ghosts, animals, humans, *aśuras*, gods. *KSGR* 3, p. 990c20.

that maintains both the discipline and the deportments. (2) The condition that is originated and generated through the power of the pure basis of original inspiration; it is the moral code that accumulates wholesome dharmas. (3) The condition that is the power of the great compassion of original wisdom; it is the moral code that aids all sentient beings.⁸⁷ (4) The condition that is the power of the penetrative knowledge of the one enlightenment; it accords with abiding in thusness. These are called the four conditions.⁸⁸

“Oh son of good family! In this wise, the power of the four great conditions does not linger over phenomenal characteristics and does not lack efficacious functioning. As it remains separate from any one [371a] locus, it cannot be sought.

“Oh son of good family! In this wise, the one phenomenon [one enlightenment] completely contains the six practices. It is the buddhas’ sea of bodhi and *sarvajña*.”

Śāriputra remarked, “[You said that] it ‘does not linger over phenomenal

⁸⁷ These three moral codes are common in Yogācāra and Yogācāra-influenced literature and have been adopted frequently in simitic Buddhist apocrypha. See discussion in part 1, chapter 4, “Reductionist Tendencies” section.

⁸⁸ This list of four conditions is peculiar to VS. Wōnhyo explains:

“The four conditions”: this means that within the one mind’s inspiration of original enlightenment is contained four powerful functions, which act as the conditions for the three moral codes. These are: (1) the condition that is based on extinction; (2) the condition based on production; (3) the condition based on absorption; (4) the condition based on separation. [1] “Based on extinction” means that the meritorious qualities inherent in original enlightenment, [which are engendered by] the tranquillity of the nature, are diametrically opposed in their own-natures to all the defilements. It is by means of this condition that one is able to perfect the moral conduct that maintains both the discipline and deportments. [2] “Based on production” means that the meritorious qualities inherent in original enlightenment, [which are engendered by] the wholesomeness of the nature, completely harmonize in their own natures with the wholesome faculties (*kuśalamūla*). It is by means of this condition that one is able to perfect the moral conduct that accumulates wholesome dharmas. [3] “Based on absorption” means that great compassion produced in the nature, which is inherent in original enlightenment, does not of its own accord abandon any sentient being. It is by means of this condition that one completes the moral conduct that embraces sentient beings. [4] “Based on separation” means that the *prajñā* produced in the nature, which is inherent in original enlightenment, stays far removed of its own accord from all phenomenal characteristics. It is by means of this condition that one causes the three moral codes to stay separate from phenomenal characteristics and abide in accordance with thusness. The prior three conditions have a specific application; the last one is a condition that is of universal application.

When a bodhisattva arouses the thought [of enlightenment] and receives the three moral codes, he receives and keeps these while remaining in harmony with the benefit of original enlightenment; hence these four conditions are replete in the three [groups of] precepts. Such is the general import [of this passage].

characteristics and does not lack efficacious functioning.’ Such a dharma would be true voidness, which is permanent, blissful, selfhood, and pure. As it transcends [the attachment to] the two types of selfhood [viz., the selfhood of person and dharmas], it is great *parinirvāṇa*. That mind has no bonds: this is a contemplation that has considerable force. All the thirty-seven aspects of enlightenment (*bodhipakṣikadharmā*) are necessarily contained in this contemplation and in this [original] enlightenment [where subject and object are balanced].”

The Buddha said, “So indeed does it contain the thirty-seven aspects of enlightenment. What are these? They are the four applications of mindfulness (*smṛtyupasthāna*); the four right efforts (*samyakprahāṇa*); the four bases of psychic power (*ṛddhipāda*); the five faculties (*indriya*); the five powers (*śakti*); the seven limbs of enlightenment (*bodhyaṅga*); the eightfold path (*mārgāṅga*), and so forth. These many classifications have but one meaning [i.e., they all conduce to enlightenment], for they are neither unitary nor separate. But because their designations are manifold, they are merely names and merely letters;⁸⁹ those dharmas are unascertainable (*anupalabdhi*). An unascertainable dharma has but a single meaning and is free from locution. That characteristic of being free from locution is the nature of true and real voidness. The meaning of that void nature accords with reality (*yathābhūta*) and is thus. That principle which is thus contains all dharmas. Oh son of good family! A person who abides in that principle which is thus thereby crosses over the sea of the three sufferings.”

Śāriputra asked, “Each and every one of the myriads of dharmas is but verbalization and locution. That which is characterized by verbalization and locution has no meaning and a meaning that accords with reality cannot be explained verbally. So why now does the Tathāgata preach the dharma?”

The Buddha replied, “I preach the dharma because you sentient beings persist in needing explanations. I preach what cannot be spoken of. This is why I preach [the dharma]. My speech consists of meaningful words, not mere locution; sentient beings’ speech consists of mere locution and is not meaningful. Meaningless words are all vain and worthless. Vain and worthless words say nothing about meaning, and anything that does not convey meaning is false speech.

“As far as speaking in accordance with meaning is concerned, the real is void and yet not void; voidness is real and yet unreal. [Speaking in accor-

⁸⁹ See *Mo-ho po-jo po-lo-mi ching* 1 (T 223.8.221c19) where the Buddha also addresses Śāriputra, telling him that all concepts “are explained merely with names and letters.”

dance with meaning] remains separate from dualistic characteristics, but also is not centered in between. The dharma that is not so centered remains far removed from these three characteristics [voidness, reality, and their interstice]; its location cannot be found.

“[Those words which remain separate from these three characteristics] are spoken according to thusness. Thusness is nonexistent and makes existence nonexistent, for there is no existence in nonexistence. Thusness is nonexistent and makes nonexistence existent, for there is nonexistence in existence. Neither existence nor nonexistence applies. Because such statements are inapplicable, [the concept] ‘thusness’ [too] is inapplicable. Thusness is not said to be either thusness that is existent or thusness that is nonexistent.”⁹⁰

Śāriputra said, “All sentient beings begin as *icchantikas*.⁹¹ On what levels should the *icchantika*’s thoughts abide in order to reach the [level of] the tathāgatas and the tathāgatas’ real characteristic?”

The Buddha said, “From the [level of] the *icchantika*’s mind up until one reaches the tathāgatas and the real characteristic of the tathāgatas, one passes through five levels.⁹²

“First is the level of faith [comprising the ten faiths]. [The practitioner] has faith that in this body there is a seed of true thusness,⁹³ which is obscured by the deceptions [of incredulity and nescience]. By relinquishing the deceptive thoughts and leaving them far behind, the pure mind will become clear and transparent and one will know that all the sense realms are just the discriminations of ratiocination and verbalization [i.e., they are mere-representation].

“Second is the level of consideration [comprising the ten abidings, ten practices, and ten transferences]. ‘Consideration’ means that one contemplates the fact that all the sense realms are nothing more than ratiocination

⁹⁰ This paragraph is one of the worst sections of *VS* to construe. Wōnhyo has to bring all of his exegetical talents to bear to make any sense of the passage; see his convoluted explanations at *KSGR* 3, p. 992c12–29

⁹¹ *Ichchantika* here is used to refer to anyone who has yet to generate the aspiration for full enlightenment (*bodhicittotpāda*), or who does not have faith in the Mahāyāna. See *KSGR* 3, p. 993a9–16.

⁹² The following section outlines the five major divisions of the bodhisattva path found in many sinic apocryphal scriptures, such as *P’u-sa ying-lo pen-yeh ching* (*T* 1485.24.1017a3, 1010b27, 1022b13). The correlations Wōnhyo draws between the *VS* schema and the more standard list found in other scriptures are bracketed in the translation

⁹³ See the discussion of the significance of this passage in the development of the buddha-nature concept in Tokiwa Daijō, *Busshō no kenkyū*, p. 406

and verbalization. [As those sense realms are] the discriminations of ratiocination and verbalization, they manifest according to one's mind (*manas*). Those sense realms which are perceived are not my original consciousness,⁹⁴ for I know that the original consciousness is neither a dharma, nor its meaning, nor [those external sense objects] to which one clings, nor [that mentality] which clings.

“Third is the level of cultivation [the ten *bhūmis*]. Cultivation involves constant training in that which catalyzes spiritual development [the simultaneous cultivation of calmness (*śamatha*) and insight (*vipaśyanā*)]. Training and cultivation are to be simultaneous and initially guided by [preparatory] knowledge [*kahaeng-chi*; *sambhārajñāna*]. Overcoming all hindrances and difficulties, one removes all [371b] restraints and shackles and stays far removed from them.

“Fourth is the level of practice [equal enlightenment]. Practice means to leave behind all the stages of practice [the ten *bhūmis*]. The mind that is free from both clinging and rejection [manifests] the extremely pure, fundamental inspiration [viz., original enlightenment]. The thusness of the mind will be motionless [because the adept accesses the vajrasamādhi], and the real nature will become fixed. This is great *parinirvāṇa*. Its nature alone is void and vast.

“Fifth is the level of relinquishment [sublime enlightenment, the stage of buddhahood]. Not lingering in the voidness of the nature, right knowledge flows freely. Great compassion is characterized by thusness but that characteristic does not linger in thusness. *Samyaksambodhi* empties the mind so that there is nothing to realize. As the mind is boundless and limitless, it does not focus on a single, limited spot. This [is what is meant by] reaching the *tathāgatas*.

“Oh son of good family! These five levels are but one enlightenment; they are accessed through the inspiration of original [enlightenment]. The proselytization of sentient beings must occur from that original locus.”

Śāriputra asked, “What do you mean by ‘must occur from that original locus’?”

The Buddha replied, “Originally there is no original locus. On the brink

⁹⁴ “ ‘Original consciousness’ is so called, because the sixth consciousness is the origin of the three realms of existence. As a *gāthā* recited by [Ārya]Deva Bodhisattva says, ‘The mind-consciousness is the basis of the three [realms of] existence. . . .’ ” *KSGR* 3, p. 993b20–21. I have been unable to locate the precise verse cited here by Wōnhyo. However, a similar verse appears in *Kuang Po-lun pen* [**Śataśāstra*], *T* 1570.30.185c10–11, and see exegesis at *Ta-sheng Kuang Po-lun shih-lun* 9, *T* 1571.30.236a.

of voidness, which has no locus, one accesses reality and, arousing bodhi, completes the sanctified path. Why is this? Oh son of good family! Like a hand grabbing air, [enlightenment] is neither obtained nor not obtained.”

Śāriputra remarked, “As the Lord has explained, at the inception of one’s vocation, one should cleave therewith to the inspiration of original [enlightenment]. Such a state of mind is calm and extinguished, and that calm extinction is thus. [Thusness] encodes all the meritorious qualities [of original and actualized enlightenments] and contains the myriad of dharmas: this is consummate interfusion, which is nondual. It is inconceivable! We should know that this dharma is in fact mahāprajñāpāramitā [great perfection of wisdom]. It is the great spiritual spell, the spell of great clarity, the unsurpassed spell, the unequalled spell.”⁹⁵

The Buddha said, “So it is, so it is! True thusness has voidness as its nature. As its nature is void, its knowledge is empyreal, incinerating all the fetters. In an equipoised and balanced manner, the three stages of equal enlightenment (*tūṅgak*) and the three bodies of sublime enlightenment (*myogak*) shine brilliantly in the ninth consciousness so that there are no shadows.⁹⁶

“Oh son of good family! This dharma is not subject either to causes or conditions, because it is just wisdom functioning on its own. It is neither moving nor still, because the nature of that functioning is void. Its meaning neither exists nor does not exist, because the characteristic of voidness is void.

⁹⁵ This passage is taken from the final line of Hsüan-tsang’s rendering of the *Prajñāpāramitāhṛdaya-sūtra* [*Heart Sūtra*], (T 251.8.848c14–15), which was made on July 8, 649 (Lancaster and Park, *The Korean Buddhist Canon*, p. 11). This date provides the terminus a quo for the composition of VS.

⁹⁶ “The three stages of equal enlightenment” are distinct levels in which the lifespan of the bodhisattva lasts for respectively a hundred kalpas, a thousand kalpas, and ten thousand kalpas. On the first level, the bodhisattva practices all the samādhis and finally enters the vajrasamādhi. On the second level, he practices all the deportments of a buddha, until he finally sits at the *bodhimanda* and overcomes Māra’s hordes. On the final level, he leads the life of a fully enlightened buddha. These derive from *P’u-sa ying-lo pen-yeh ching* 1, T 1485 24.1012c27–1013a9. The three bodies of sublime enlightenment are the three buddha-bodies: the dharmakāya, sambhogakāya, and nirmānakāya. Explaining “[these] shine brilliantly in the ninth consciousness so that there are no shadows,” Wōnhyo says. “The previous stage of equal enlightenment is still involved with birth and death and has not yet depleted the fountainhead of the mind; for this reason, it is located within the eight consciousnesses. Arriving at sublime enlightenment, one now leaves birth and death behind forever and returns completely to the fountainhead of the one mind of original enlightenment. Hence, he accesses the clear purity of the ninth consciousness. . . . Now, returning to the fountainhead of the mind, that original substance becomes one’s essence, and due to this, all shadows—all characteristics—become extinct.” KSGR 3, p. 994c25–29.

“Oh son of good family! If one proselytes sentient beings, one should make those sentient beings access this meaning through contemplation. One who accesses this meaning will see the tathāgatas.”

Śāriputra remarked, “Contemplation of the tathāgatas’ meaning does not linger in any of the currents [of existence]. One should leave behind the four dhyānas and transcend the summit of existence (*bhavāgra*).”⁹⁷

The Buddha said, “So it is. And why is this? All dharmas are but names and classifications. This is also the case with the four dhyānas. If one sees the tathāgatas, [one’s own] tathāgata-mind will become autonomous (*aiśvarya*) and remain eternally in a state of extinction, neither withdrawing from [that state] nor accessing it. This is because both internal [the mind] and external [the sense objects] will be in equilibrium.

“Oh son of good family! In the same way, all [eight types of] dhyānic contemplations are absorptions that involve past conceptions.”⁹⁸

“But this thusness, furthermore, is not the same as those [types of dhyāna]. Why so? One who contemplates thusness through thusness perceives no sign that he is ‘contemplating thusness.’ All signs are already calm and extinct. Calm extinction is in fact the meaning of thusness.

“In the same way, a dhyānic absorption that involves such conceptions is active [because it clings to the characteristics of mundane dhyāna] and is not [true] dhyāna.”⁹⁹ Why is this? The nature of dhyāna is separate from all movement. It neither taints nor is tainted; it is neither a dharma nor its shadow. It is far removed from all discrimination, because it is the meaning of the original inspiration.¹⁰⁰ Oh son of good family! This sort of contemplative absorption alone deserves to be called dhyāna.”

Śāriputra asked, “It is inconceivable! The tathāgata constantly proselytes sentient beings by means of that which accords with reality (*yathābhūta*). In this wise, [371c] the real meaning has many locutions and vast import.

⁹⁷ The summit of existence refers to the last of the four formless dhyānas, the absorption of neither perception nor nonperception (*naivasamjñāsamjñāyatana*).

⁹⁸ Following Wōnhyo’s recension (*KSGR* 3, p. 995b9); no variants are noted by the Taishō editors; *VS*, p. 371b24. Wōnhyo glosses “absorptions that involve past conceptions” as follows: “This is because they do not leave behind past grasping at the beginningless deceptive thoughts that cling to all the [mundane] characteristics.” *KSGR* 3, p. 995b17.

⁹⁹ A parallel phrase (“activity is not dhyāna”) appears in the apocryphal *Dharmapada*, *p’in* 11, *Fa-chü ching*, *T* 2901.85.1435a22. That *p’in* is frequently cited in Ch’an writings; see discussion in Mizuno, “Gisaku no *Hokkukyō*,” pp. 17–20.

¹⁰⁰ Following the Koryō II/Taishō recension. The Wōnhyo, K’ai-pao, and Three Editions read instead “the meaning of its original meaning,” a probable dittography of the first “meaning.” *VS*, p. 371b27 n. 7.

Sentient beings of sharp faculties alone are able to cultivate it; sentient beings of dull faculties find it difficult to recall. Through what expedient device may we prompt those of dull faculties to gain access to this truth?”

The Buddha replied, “One should encourage those of dull faculties to receive and keep one four-line gāthā; this will then allow them access to the real truth. All of the buddhadharma is contained within a single four-line¹⁰¹ gāthā.”

Śāriputra asked, “What is this four-line gāthā? I beg you to recite it.”
Thereupon, the Lord recited the gāthā:

Objects¹⁰² that are produced by causes and conditions,
Those objects are extinguished, not produced.
Extinguish all objects subject to production and extinction,
And those objects will be produced, not extinguished.¹⁰³

At that time, the great congregation heard this gāthā and all were utterly rapturous. Everyone came to understand both extinction and production. The prajñā [that comprehends] extinction and production is a sea that knows the nature is void.

¹⁰¹ The Wōnhyo and K'ai-pao recensions omit “four-line.” KSGR 3, p. 995c19; VS, p. 371c4 n. 8.

¹⁰² “Objects” here renders the logograph *ūi* (Skt. *artha*), which can refer to either meaning or object; both senses are probably implicit in the gāthā. “Dharma” is used for “object” in the text from which this gāthā derives (see next note).

¹⁰³ The first line of this gāthā is taken, with minor modifications, from Kumārajīva’s translation of the *Madhyamakakārikā* (*Chung-lun*, T 1654.30.33b11–12, *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* xxiv.19); see also *Chung-kuan lun shu* (T 1824.42.152b1), *Ju ta-sheng lun*, T 1634.32.41b; *Fo-tsu t'ung-chi* 37, T 2035.49.352a4–5; *Mo-ho chih-kuan* 1a, T 1911.46.1b29–c1. These and other sources are cited at Liebenthal (pp. 375–76, 375 n. 3, and 382). For the import of this gāthā, see Ko Ikchin, pp. 246–47. In his exegesis, Wōnhyo clarifies that the first half of the gāthā refers to all dharmas as explained from the standpoint of conventional truth; it reconciles the mundane with the absolute. The second half refers to the dharma of calm extinction (i.e., *nirvāṇa*) as explained from the standpoint of absolute truth; it reconciles the absolute with the mundane. KSGR 3, pp. 996c27–997a19.

Chapter Seven

The Tathāgatagarbha

[371c10] At that time, the Elder Pōmhaeng arose from the original limit (*ponje*)¹⁰⁴ and addressed the Buddha: “Lord! “The object that is produced is not extinguished; the object that is extinguished is not produced. In this wise, the object that is thus is in fact the bodhi of the buddhas. The nature of bodhi is in fact free from discrimination. The nondiscriminative knowledge cannot be fathomed by discrimination. This characteristic of being unfathomable is just the extinction of discrimination.¹⁰⁵ In this wise, both objects and characteristics are inconceivable, and in this inconceivability there is accordingly no discrimination.

“Lord! All the classifications of dharmas are immeasurable and limitless, but that limitless characteristic of dharmas has but one real meaning.¹⁰⁶ [The many doctrinal teachings] have but a single nature. How can that be?”

The Buddha replied, “Elder! It is inconceivable! I preach all the dharmas because of my concern for those who are deluded, and because it is an expedient way. All the characteristics of dharmas are but the knowledge of this one real meaning. Why is this? It is just like four gates that open upon a single city: one may return to that single city through any of those four gates. And just as the populace [of that city] may freely enter [through any gate], just so is it the same with the tastes of the myriad types of dharmas [all of which merge in the single taste].”¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁴ “Listening to the Buddha’s words is in fact accessing the original limit” *KSGR* 3, p. 996b15–16.

¹⁰⁵ This is the earliest quoted portion of *VS*; see Fa-tsang’s *Hua-yen ching i-hai po-men*, *T* 1875.45.628c21–22, and discussion in part 1, chapter 4.

¹⁰⁶ A problematic passage. I follow Wōnhyo in ignoring the logograph “nature” (*sōng*) in my rendering. *KSGR* 3, 996b27–c2.

¹⁰⁷ This simile is used also in Wōnhyo’s *Pōmmang-kyōng posal kyebon sagi* (Personal notes to the “Bodhisattva Vinaya” text of the *Fan-wang ching*) 1, *HTC* 95.108b7–15.

The Elder Pōmhaeng remarked, “If this is indeed how dharmas are, I should be able to imbibe each and every taste while lingering in that single taste.”

The Buddha replied, “So it is, so it is! Why is this? The true meaning of the single taste—its taste¹⁰⁸ can be compared to that of the one ocean: there is none of the myriad of streams that does not flow into it. Elder! The tastes of all the dharmas are just like those streams: while their names and classifications may differ, that water is indistinguishable.¹⁰⁹ And once [those streams] have flowed into the ocean, [that seawater] then¹¹⁰ absorbs all those streams.¹¹¹ [In the same way,] if one lingers in the single taste, then all tastes are imbibed.”

The Elder Pōmhaeng asked, “If all dharmas are of a single taste, then how is it that there are [separate] paths for the three vehicles? Does their knowledge have distinctions?”

The Buddha replied, “Elder! It is like the [Ch’ang]-chiang [Yangtze River], the [Hwang]-ho [Yellow River], the Huai [River], and the ocean: because there are variations in their size, disparities in their depth, and differences in their names, when water is in the [Ch’ang]-chiang it is called Chiang water, when it is in the Huai it is called Huai water, and when it is in the Ho it is called Ho water. But once all these types [of water] enter the ocean, they are just called seawater.¹¹² The dharmas [i.e., the three vehicles] are also the same: once they all abide in true thusness they are just called [372a] the path to buddhahood.

“Elder! One who dwells in the one path to buddhahood¹¹³ then comprehends three practices.”

The Elder Pōmhaeng asked, “What are those three practices?”

¹⁰⁸ “Taste” is missing in the Koryō II/Taishō edition (*VS*, p. 371c22) and is added from Wōnhyo’s recension; *KSGR* 3, p. 996c22.

¹⁰⁹ See part 1, chapter 3, for discussion of this common metaphor, which is often used to explain the soteriological purport of the teachings of Buddhism.

¹¹⁰ Following the Koryō II/Taishō recension, which reads *chūk* (“then”) for Wōnhyo’s *chūk* (“is in fact”); *KSGR* 3, p. 996c24, *VS*, p. 371c24; and *passim* throughout chapters 7 and 8.

¹¹¹ An allusion to this passage appears in *Platform Sūtra*: “It is like the great sea which gathers all the flowing streams, and merges together the small waters and large waters into one.” *Liutsu t’an chung*, *T* 2007.48.340b18–19; Yampolsky, trans., p. 150

¹¹² Compare *Udāna* 5.4: “Whatsoever great rivers there are—namely, Gaṅgā, Yamunā, Aciravatī, Sarabhū, Mahī—these, when they reach the mighty ocean, abandon their former names and lineage, and go henceforth by the name of just ‘mighty ocean.’” Translation from F. L. Woodward, *The Minor Anthologies of the Pali Canon*, p. 64. The use of native geographical names in this passage is a strong piece of textual evidence suggesting the non-Indian origin of this scripture; see Mizuno, pp. 42–43; Liebenthal, p. 361.

¹¹³ The first *bhūmi* on up. *KSGR* 3, p. 997a20.

The Buddha replied, “First is that practice that cleaves to phenomena. Second is the practice that cleaves to consciousness. Third is the practice that cleaves to thusness.¹¹⁴ Elder! In this wise, the three practices subsume completely all approaches; there are no approaches to dharma that are not accessed thereby. One who accesses these practices does not produce the characteristic of voidness. And one who accesses [these practices] in this manner can be said to have accessed the tathāgata.¹¹⁵ One who accesses the tathāgata accesses that access via nonaccess.”

The Elder Pōmhaeng asked, “This is inconceivable! Accessing the tathāgatagarbha has no access point; it is like a sprout that matures into a fruit. Through the power of the fundamental inspiration, that inspiration will bring about the recovery of the original [edge of reality].¹¹⁶ In attaining that original edge of reality, how many kinds of knowledge would one have?”

The Buddha replied, “His knowledge would be unfathomable. But were we to explain it in brief, he would have four types of knowledge. What are the four? First is fixed knowledge: that is, [knowledge] that accords with thusness. Second is adaptable knowledge: that is, [knowledge] that expediently extirpates and destroys [the defilements]. Third is nirvāṇa knowledge: that is, [knowledge] that removes lightning[-like] sensory awareness.¹¹⁷ Fourth is ultimate knowledge: that is, [knowledge] that accesses reality and perfects the path.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁴ I reproduce the passage again with Wōnhyo’s glosses added: “The practice that cleaves to phenomena: (while relying on the four noble truths and the twelvefold chain of conditioned generation,) one cleaves to (the *bodhipakṣika-dharmas*) in accordance with phenomena (that are governed by cause and effect). The practice that cleaves to consciousness: all sentient beings are merely products of the one mind. They cleave to the practice (of the four means of conversion [*samgrahavastu*]: giving [*dāna*], kind words [*priyavadya*], helpfulness [*arthacaryā*], and cooperation [*samanārthatā*]) in accordance with (the principle that there is just) consciousness. The practice that cleaves to thusness: all dharmas are equal. One cleaves to the practice (of the six pāramitās) in accordance with the thusness (that is equal). To ‘cleave’ here means to absorb these practices in the mind; it does not mean to cling to the subject-object distinction.” See *KSGR* 3, p. 997a22–26.

¹¹⁵ Following Wōnhyo’s recension (*KSGR* 3, p. 997b1) Wōnhyo glosses tathāgata here as the “sea of the tathāgatagarbha”; *KSGR* 3, p. 997b9.

¹¹⁶ “‘Sprout’ is a simile for the inspiration of original [enlightenment]. ‘Fruit’ is a simile for attaining that original [inspiration].” *KSGR* 3, p. 997b18.

¹¹⁷ “Lightning” refers to the production and extinction of the five sensory consciousnesses, the speed of which is compared to the flash of lightning; *KSGR* 3, p. 997c7.

¹¹⁸ Wōnhyo correlates the first type of knowledge, fixed knowledge, with the equanimous wisdom (*samatājñāna*), the second of the four types of wisdoms recognized in the Yogācāra school. The second type, adaptable knowledge, is the wisdom of sublime observation (*pratyāveśanājñāna*). The third type, nirvāṇa knowledge, is the wisdom gained through the accom-

“Elder! In this wise, the operation of these four great matters has been explained by all the buddhas of antiquity as being a great bridge and a great ford. If you are to proselyte sentient beings, you should make use of these knowledges.

“Elder! The operation of these great functions involves, furthermore, three great matters. First, the internal [consciousnesses] and the external [sense realms] do not mutually infringe¹¹⁹ on one another in the three samādhis [see *infra*]. Second, in the great matrix of meaning [see *infra*], the analytical suppression (*pratisamkhyānirodha*) occurs in accordance with the path.¹²⁰ Third, the wisdom and concentration that are thus are both inspired by compassion. In this wise, these three matters perfect bodhi. One who does not practice these matters will then be unable to flow into the sea of the four knowledges and will be subject to the whims of all the great *māras*.

“Elder! Until all of you in the congregation attain buddhahood, you ought constantly to cultivate and train, without even a temporary respite.”

The Elder Pōmhaeng asked, “What are the three samādhis?”

The Buddha replied, “The three samādhis are the samādhi of voidness (*śūnyasamādhi*), the samādhi of signlessness (*ānimittasamādhi*), and the samādhi of wishlessness (*apraṇihitasamādhi*).¹²¹ These are the samādhis.”

The Elder Pōmhaeng asked, “What is the great matrix of meaning?”

The Buddha replied, “‘Great’ means the four great elements. ‘Meaning’ means the aggregates (*skandha*), elements (*dhātu*), and sense-fields (*āyatana*), and other [lists, such as the twelvefold chain of conditioned origination]. ‘Matrix’ means the original consciousness. This is called the great matrix of meaning.”

The Elder Pōmhaeng said, “It is inconceivable! In this wise, the [three]

plishment of what was to be done (*krtyānusthānājñāna*). The fourth type, ultimate knowledge, is equated with great perfect mirror wisdom (*ādarśanājñāna*). *KSGR* 3, p. 997b2–c10.

¹¹⁹ Lit., snatch away. Cf. the celebrated usage of this term by Lin-chi I-hsüan (d. 866) in his four approaches to practice (snatch away the man, but don’t snatch away the objects; etc.); see *Lin-chi lu*, T 1985.47.497a.

¹²⁰ “One analyzes the four great elements and the three main dharma classifications [*skandha*, *dhātu*, and *āyatana*] according to the principle; this eradicates all signs and brings to an end the fundamental consciousness’s seeds of conceptual proliferation (*prapañca*). The preceding [sic] three samādhis overcome the bonds that have manifested at present; this analytical wisdom destroys their seeds. Because of this, at the time that one perfects accordingly the four wisdoms, one can uproot the seeds and bring about the evolution of the eight consciousnesses [into the pure ninth consciousness].” *KSGR* 3, p. 998a4–8.

¹²¹ These last two types of samādhis are transposed in the Wōnhyo and K’ai-pao recensions; *VS*, p. 372a20 nn. 6, 7. For this common list, see *Mo-ho po-jo po-lo-mi ching* 24, T 223.8.394c26–27.

matters [that bring about the perfection of the four] knowledges inspire both oneself and others, transcend the lands of the three realms, do not linger in nirvāṇa, and access the bodhisattva path.

“These sorts of characteristics of dharmas are things that are subject to production and extinction, because they involve discrimination. If one stays far removed from discrimination, these dharmas ought not be subject to extinction.”

Wishing to proclaim this idea, the Tathāgata then recited this gāthā:

Dharmas are produced by discrimination,
And in turn are extinguished due to discrimination,
Extinguish all dharmas that are subject to discrimination,
And those dharmas will be neither produced nor extinguished.

At that time, the Elder Pōmhaeng heard the recitation of this gāthā and his mind was jubilant and elated. Wishing to proclaim its meaning, [372b] he recited gāthās:

All dharmas are originally calm and extinguished,
But this calm extinction is also unproduced.
All those dharmas that are subject to production and extinction,
Those dharmas are not unproduced.
Those [dharmas that are calm, extinct, and unproduced] are thence not
associated with these [dharmas subject to production and extinction],
Because each is subject to either annihilationism or eternalism,¹²²
This [dharma spoken by the Buddha] thence leaves behind all such dualities,
But also does not persist in lingering in oneness.
If it is said that dharmas are one,
This characteristic will be like a hairnet.¹²³
It is like mistaking heat-waves for water,
This is because all [such conceptions] are false and deceptive.¹²⁴
If you perceive the nonexistence of dharmas,
Those dharmas will be identical to voidness,

¹²² Dharmas subject to production and extinction would be subject to annihilationism; calm-and-extinct dharmas would be subject to eternalism. *KSGR* 3, p. 998c24–27.

¹²³ For “hairnet” (*moryun*) as a metaphor for something “gossamery,” viz., illusory, see *Ju Leng-ch’ieh ching* (*Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra*) 9, T 671.16.565c16; *Jen-wang ching* 1, T 246.8.839a23.

¹²⁴ The last two lines of this verse derive from *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra*; see *Ju Leng-ch’ieh ching* 3, T 671.16.532b28; and cf. *Ta-sheng ju Leng-ch’ieh ching* 3, T 672.16.601c11; both noted (though the first citation is misprinted) at Liebenthal, pp. 367–68. Cf. also Suzuki’s rendering of the Sanskrit in *Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra*, p. 83, v. 150.

Just like a blind man who mistakenly believes that the sun is nonexistent,
Your preaching of the dharma would be as [deceptive as] the [nonexistent]
hair of a tortoise.

I have now heard the Buddha say,
Knowledge of the dharma is not [achieved through] dualistic views,
It also does not depend on remaining in between,
It therefore is grasped by not abiding anywhere.
The dharma spoken by the tathāgatas,
Derives completely from this nonabiding,
It is from that nonabiding place,
That I worship the tathāgatas.
Respectfully worshipping the characteristic of the tathāgatas—
That motionless wisdom which is equal to empty space,
At that place which is free from grasping [at the two extremes] and which
does not exist [in between],
I respectfully worship their nonabiding bodies.
I, in all places,
Constantly see all the tathāgatas,
I wish only that all the tathāgatas,
Will explain the perpetual dharma to me.

At that time the Tathāgata made this statement: “All you good men! Listen well and I will explain for all of you the perpetual dharma.

“Oh son of good family! The perpetual dharma is not a perpetual dharma; it is neither the spoken nor written word; it is neither truth nor liberation. It is neither nonexistence nor the sense realms and remains completely apart from the extremes of deceptive [grasping] and annihilationism. But this dharma is also not impermanent, for it remains far apart from either eternalism or annihilationism. [At the moment of] cognition, the consciousnesses are permanent. The consciousnesses are perpetually calm and extinct; but that calm extinction is also calm and extinct.

“Oh son of good family! Since he [i.e., the adept from the first *bhūmi* onward] who knows that dharmas are calm and extinct need not make his mind calm and extinct, his mind remains constantly calm and extinct. The mind of one who attains calm extinction constantly contemplates [according to] truth. He knows that all mentality and materiality are nothing but the ignorant mind. The discriminations of the ignorant mind differentiate all the dharmas; [all the dharmas] are nothing apart from name and materiality. If in this wise one knows dharmas and does not pursue written and spoken language, the mind will think only of meaning and will not distinguish the

self [as the thinker of that thought]. Knowing that the self is a hypothetical name is in fact the attainment of calm extinction. If one attains calm extinction, one then attains *anuttarasamyaksambodhi*.”

Once the Elder Pōmhaeng had heard this speech, he recited gāthās:

Names and characteristics, which are phenomena [created by]
discrimination,
Together with dharmas—these are called the three. [372c]
True thusness and orthodox, sublime knowledge:
Together with the [above] make five.¹²⁵
I now know that these dharmas,
Are fettered by annihilationism and eternalism.
Accessing the path of production and extinction,
Is annihilationism, not eternalism.
The dharma of voidness spoken by the Tathāgata,
Remains far removed from annihilationism and eternalism,
As there are no causes or conditions, [that dharma] is unproduced,
And because it is unproduced, it is not extinguished.¹²⁶
Grasping at the existence of causes and conditions,
Is like reaching for a flower in the sky,
Or expecting a barren woman’s child—
Ultimately it is unascertainable.¹²⁷
Leaving behind all clinging to causes and conditions,
One also does not follow anything else to extinction,
Or assume the selfhood of the [threefold matrix of] meaning and the [four]
great [elements].
Because of relying on thusness one attains reality.
Therefore the dharma of true thusness,
Is constantly autonomous and thus;
All the myriads of dharmas,
Are transformations of those [affective] consciousnesses which are not thus.
That dharma which remains separate from consciousness is void,
Hence it is explained from the standpoint of voidness.

¹²⁵ This verse also is adapted from *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra*. See *Ju Leng-ch’ieh ching* 3, T 671.16.527c16–17; cf. *Ta-sheng ju Leng-ch’ieh ching* 2, T 672.16.598a6; all noted by Liebenenthal, pp. 366–67. See also Suzuki, trans., p. 60, v. 134.

¹²⁶ Adapted from *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra*; *Ju Leng-ch’ieh ching* 3, T 671.16.529b5–6, 530c8–9; noted by Liebenenthal, p. 367. See Suzuki, trans., p. 68, v. 137, and p. 75, v. 140, though the Sanskrit differs radically.

¹²⁷ Adapted from *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra*; see *Ju Leng-ch’ieh ching* 530c14–15; see Liebenenthal, p. 367; Suzuki, trans., p. 75, v. 143.

One who extinguishes all those dharmas which are subject to production
and extinction,
And thence dwells in nirvāṇa,
He will be snatched away by the great compassion [of the buddhas],
So that he will not linger in the extinction of nirvāṇa.
Transmuting (*parivṛtti*) both the subject and object of clinging [mind and
sensory objects],
He accesses the tathāgatagarbha.

At that time the great assembly heard this meaning and all attained right
vocation (*samyagājīva*) and accessed the tathāgata's [wisdom] and the sea of
the tathāgatagarbha.

Chapter Eight

Dhāraṇī (Codes)

[372c18] At that time, Chijang (Earth-store; Kṣitigarbha) Bodhisattva arose from amidst the congregation and came before the Buddha.¹²⁸ Joining his palms together and genuflecting in foreign fashion, he addressed the Buddha: “Lord! I observe that the congregation entertains doubts that have yet to be resolved. The Tathāgata is now about to remove those doubts. I will now ask questions on behalf of this congregation concerning the doubts that remain; I beg that the Tathāgata, out of his friendliness and compassion, will take pity on us and grant this request.”

The Buddha replied, “Bodhisattva-*mahāsattva!* That you are interested in rescuing sentient beings shows that your great compassion and empathy is inconceivable. You should question me extensively, and I will answer you.”

Chijang Bodhisattva asked, “How is it that all dharmas are not conditionally produced?”

Wishing to proclaim this meaning, the Tathāgata then recited a gāthā:

If dharmas are produced by conditions,
Then no dharmas could exist apart from conditions.
How is it that conditions can produce dharmas,
When the dharma-nature is nonexistent?¹²⁹

¹²⁸ “In [this chapter] are resolved all the doubts remaining from the previous chapters. It encodes (*dhārayati*) the important meanings, without forgetting them; this is why it gets the name ‘Dhāraṇī.’ Moreover, because Chijang Bodhisattva had already attained the dhāraṇī of the meaning of language (*munī t’arāṇī*), he thoroughly retained the meaning of all the passages in the [preceding] chapters and remembered the points on which the congregation had doubts. Next, he asks questions in order to resolve well all those doubts. Hence, because he was able to ask these questions, this chapter is entitled ‘Dhāraṇī.’ ” *KSGR* 3, p. 1001a20–21.

¹²⁹ “This exchange is intended to resolve doubts remaining from the ‘Tathāgatagarbha’ chapter. It was said there [*VS*, chap. 7, at n. 126], ‘As there are no causes and conditions, [that dharma] is unproduced, / And because it is unproduced, it is not extinguished.’ In this passage

At that time, Chijang Bodhisattva asked, “If dharmas are unproduced, then how is it that in your dharma-talks you say that dharmas are produced by the mind?”

Thereupon, the Lord recited a gāthā: [373a]

Dharmas that are produced by the mind,
Those dharmas cling to subject and object,
They are like sky-flowers in a drunkard’s eyes,
Those dharmas are just-so and not otherwise.

At that time, Chijang Bodhisattva remarked, “If this is what dharmas are like, then those dharmas would have no analogues¹³⁰ [and they would be like thusness]. Dharmas that have no analogues—those dharmas ought to be generated spontaneously [without causes].”

Thereupon the Lord recited a gāthā:

Dharmas are originally free from both existence and nonexistence,
So too is this the case for self and others,
As [those dharmas] have neither beginning nor end,
Both accomplishment and failure are in fact meaningless [lit.,
nonabiding].¹³¹

At that point Chijang Bodhisattva said, “The characteristics of each and every dharma are originally nirvāṇa. This is also the case with nirvāṇa and the characteristic of voidness. The dharma that remains once these types of dharmas are nonexistent ought to be thus.”

The Buddha replied, “Once there are no such dharmas, that [remaining] dharma will be thus.”

there is clinging to the existence of causes and conditions as being that which catalyzes production, but a doubt remains as to why the fruition [of that causal process] would not [also] be conditionally produced. Hence, [Chijang] uses this doubt in order to ask about conditioned generation.” *KSGR* 3, p. 1001b16–19.

¹³⁰ “Analogue” (*tae*) here might also be rendered as “counterpart,” or “complementarity.” The sense is that the production of those dharmas would not be dependent on the existence of any other dharma—i. e., they would not be conditionally generated.

¹³¹ These last two exchanges were intended to resolve doubts remaining from the “Voidness of the True Nature” chapter. It was said there (*VS*, chap. 6, after n. 89), “I preach the dharma because you sentient beings persist in needing explanations. I preach what cannot be spoken of. This is why I preach [the dharma].” The issue in this passage is that if the dharma spoken by the Buddha arises from his mind, as the “Voidness of the True Nature” chapter implied, then it would be impossible for that dharma to be unproduced, as Chijang remarks in his initial question. *KSGR* 3, p. 1001b25–28.

Chijang Bodhisattva said, “This is inconceivable. The characteristic of thusness is in this wise neither associated nor dissociated. Clinging to mentality and clinging to action are in fact both void and calm. The void and calm mind-dharma may not cling to both [saṃsāra and nirvāṇa] or neither, for it too is perforce calm and extinct.”¹³²

Thereupon, the Lord recited a gāthā:

All void and calm dharmas,
Those dharmas are calm but not void,
When the mind is not void,
That will bring about the nonexistence of the mind.¹³³

At that point, Chijang Bodhisattva said, “This dharma [of the one mind] does not involve the three truths, for [the three truths of] materiality, voidness, and mind are also extinguished. When these [three] dharmas are originally extinguished, that dharma [of the one mind] ought also to be extinguished.”

Thereupon the Lord recited a gāthā:

Dharmas are originally devoid of own-nature,
They arise from that [mind of original enlightenment],
While not found in this sort of [discriminative] loci,
They are involved in this wise with that [one enlightenment which is signless].¹³⁴

¹³² “Associated” means that the distinction between two types of thusness—the thusness of the original nirvāṇa, and the thusness that is an amalgamation of nirvāṇa and the characteristic of voidness—would not be true thusness. “Dissociated” refers to the fact that these two types are not void, for they are instead a single thusness. “Clinging to mentality” refers to nirvāṇa, for the calm and extinct mind may become an object of clinging. “Clinging to action” refers to saṃsāra, because it is the object to which all defiled action clings. *KSGR* 3, p. 1002a7–16. The first line of this passage is easier to construe if *kong* (associated) is read as instead a misprint for *i* (different), which has occurred previously in the text. This first line would then read: “The sign of thusness is in this wise neither different nor identical.”

¹³³ The preceding exchanges were intended to resolve doubts remaining from the “Approaching the Edge of Reality” chapter. It was said there (*VS*, chap. 5, before n. 62), “Taeryōk Bodhisattva said, . . . ‘As far as the mental characteristics of sentient beings are concerned, those characteristics are identical to the tathāgata. Hence, the minds of sentient beings should also be free from any discrete sense realms.’ The Buddha said, ‘So it is. The minds of sentient beings are actually free from any discrete sense realms. Why is that? It is because the mind is originally pure, and the principle unsullied.’” The issue in this passage is that the person might confuse this original purity of the mind, which corresponds to thusness, with that heterodox nonexistence, which does not correspond to thusness. *KSGR* 3, p. 1001c21–27.

¹³⁴ This exchange has countered doubts raised in the “Inspiration of Original Enlightenment” chapter. As a passage there stated (*VS*, chap. 4, after n. 34), “Muju Bodhisattva said, ‘If

At that time, Chijang Bodhisattva asked, “All dharmas are neither produced nor extinguished. So how is it that they are not all one?”

Thereupon, the Lord recited a gāthā:

An abiding place for dharmas does not exist,
Both characteristics and [dharma] classifications are void and therefore
nonexistent.

These two—name and locution—together with dharmas,
These in fact involve grasping at subject and object.¹³⁵

At that point, Chijang Bodhisattva remarked, “No characteristics of dharmas linger on either of the two shores [of saṃsāra or nirvāṇa]; they also do not linger in the current between them [i.e., they are not unitary]. Mind and consciousness are similarly [free from both production and extinction]; so how is it that all the sense realms are produced by consciousness? If consciousness is the cause of that production, then consciousness too must be produced by [something else]. So how then can consciousness be unproduced? If there is production then there must be a product.”

Thereupon, the Lord recited a gāthā:

These two things—product and production,
These two are causality and the caused.
Both are originally [mere] names and are themselves nonexistent,
Clinging to their existence is an illusion, like a sky-flower. [373b]
When consciousness has not yet been produced,
Objects then are not produced either.
When objects have not yet been produced,
Consciousness is then also extinguished.
These are both originally nonexistent,

all sense realms are void, all bodies are void, and all consciousnesses are void, then enlightenment too must be void.’ The Buddha replied, ‘Each and every enlightenment has a given nature that is neither destroyed nor annihilated. They are neither void nor nonvoid, for they are free from voidness or nonvoidness.’” The issue here is that if the one mind is also nonexistent and therefore calm and extinct, why did it say in that previous passage that the enlightened mind is neither destroyed nor annihilated, and thus continues to exist? *KSGR* 3, p. 1002b3–9.

¹³⁵ This exchange has been intended to counter doubts raised in the “Practice of Nonproduction” chapter. It was said there (*VS*, chap. 3, after n. 24), “These conditions are generated, but there is no production; these conditions decay, but there is no extinction. . . . There is no place where they abide, nor is there seen anything that abides, because their natures are fixed. This fixed nature is neither unitary nor different.” The issue here is if both form and mental dharmas are unproduced and unextinguished, then they would just be identical, a conclusion that would controvert the traditional distinction between *nāma* and *rūpa* and would illogically imply that production and extinction were identical. *KSGR* 3, p. 1002b25–1002c3.

They neither exist nor do not exist.
 Consciousness that is unproduced is also nonexistent,
 So how is it that objects exist on account of it?¹³⁶

At that time, Chijang Bodhisattva remarked, “In this wise, the characteristics of dharmas are void both internally [viz., the sense-consciousnesses] and externally [viz., sense objects]. These two groups—objects and sensory awareness—are originally calm and extinct. As the Tathāgata has explained, a dharma that in this wise is the real characteristic and true voidness would not be subject to origination.”

The Buddha responded, “So it is. Dharmas that accord with reality are formless and nonabiding. They are neither originated nor do they prompt origination. They are neither meaning [i.e., the skandhas, *dhātus*, and *āyatanas*] nor the great [elements]. They are the aggregation of the profound, meritorious qualities [inherent in] the dharma of the matrix of the one original [enlightenment].”¹³⁷

Chijang Bodhisattva said, “It is inconceivable! It is inconceivable! The seventh [consciousness] and the five [sensory consciousnesses] are unproduced. The eighth and sixth [consciousnesses] are calm and extinct. The characteristic of the ninth [consciousness] is to be void and nonexistent. Existence is void and nonexistent. Nonexistence is void and nonexistent. As the Lord has explained, dharmas and phenomena are both void. Accessing the voidness [gate to liberation], there are no longer any practices [that need to be cultivated], but one also does not neglect any actions [such as the six pāramitās]. [In the signless gate to liberation,] there are neither self nor objects-of-self, neither subject nor object views. All the internal and external defilements are calm and still. Accordingly, [in the wishless gate to liberation,] wishes are also assuaged. In this wise, noumenal contemplation is the

¹³⁶ This exchange has been intended to counter doubts raised in the following passage in the “Signless Dharma” chapter (*VS*, chap. 2, before n. 16): “What is meant by ‘that characteristic of discriminative awareness, subject to production and extinction’?” The Buddha replied, ‘The principle is free from either acceptance or rejection. If there were acceptance or rejection, then all kinds of thoughts would be produced. The thousands of conceptions and myriads of mentations are marked by production and extinction.’ The issue there is that if consciousness is the source of such things as acceptance and rejection, and thus produces the various types of thoughts, then it should be subject itself to production and extinction. So how then could it be said that it does not abide on either of the two shores of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa? But if the consciousnesses are neither produced nor extinguished, then how could it be said that they produce the sense realms?” *KSGR* 3, p. 1002c19–25.

¹³⁷ Wōnhyo interprets the term “dharma of the matrix of the one original” as the “‘one original enlightenment,’ because with that as the basis, it can catalyze the production of all formations (saṃskāra) and all meritorious qualities (guṇa).” *KSGR* 3, p. 1003a29–1003b2.

true thusness in which wisdom and concentration [are perfectly balanced]. The Lord constantly explains that, in this wise,¹³⁸ the dharma of voidness is an excellent medicine.”

The Buddha replied, “So it is. Why is this? Because [voidness] is void. As this void-nature is unproduced, the mind [that accesses voidness] is perpetually unproduced. As this void-nature is not extinguished, the mind is perpetually unextinguished. As the void-nature is nonabiding, the mind is also nonabiding. As the void-nature is inactive (*muwi*), the mind is also inactive. Voidness is free from both egress and access, and leaves behind both gain and loss. The skandhas, elements, and sense realms, and so forth, are also all nonexistent. So too is this the case with the mind that accords [with voidness in not clinging to egress and access] and does not grasp [at the skandhas, etc.]. Bodhisattva! I have discussed the various aspects of voidness in order to destroy [the grasping at] all [types of] existence.”

Chijang Bodhisattva said, “Lord! Would that meditator be considered wise who knows that existence is unreal, like heat-waves that are [not] water, and that reality is not nonexistent, like the sovereignty of fire that is inherent [in wood]?”¹³⁹

The Buddha replied, “So it is. Why is this? This person’s true contemplation contemplates the calm extinction of the one [mind]. Signs and signlessness are grasped in voidness as being equal, and since voidness is cultivated [and one therefore accords with the buddha-mind], one does not lose one’s vision of the buddhas. Because one sees the buddhas, one does not flow along with the three currents.

“In the Mahāyāna, the path of the three liberations [here, voidness, signlessness, wishlessness] has but a single essence and is devoid of nature. Because it is devoid of nature, it is void; because it is void, it is signless; because

¹³⁸ Following Wōnhyo’s gloss; KSGR 3, p. 1003c10.

¹³⁹ For this simile, see *Kuang Po-lun pen*, T 1570.31.185b21–26. The translation follows Wōnhyo’s interpretation. Wōnhyo comments,

“Like the sovereignty of fire that is inherent [in wood]”: this is to say, it is just like in wood is innate the nature of the great element of fire, but if one splits [that wood] in order to find that [fire] one will never discover its characteristic of heat. And yet, that nature of fire is really not nonexistent in wood, because if one searches for it using friction [lit., drilling] that fire will perforce appear. The one mind is also the same. One cannot find the nature of the mind by analyzing [lit., splitting] all its characteristics. And yet in reality it cannot be nonexistent in all dharmas, because if the mind cultivates the path in order to find it, the one mind will appear. In this wise, as far as the nature of fire is concerned, its characteristic [of heat] is hidden but its power is great, just like the sovereign of a kingdom; hence, it is called “sovereign.”

KSGR 3, p. 1004a17–22.

it is signless, it is wishless; because it is wishless, it seeks nothing; because it seeks nothing, it is free from anticipation. Due to this action, the mind is purified. Because the mind is purified, one sees the buddhas. Because one sees the buddhas, one then will be reborn in the Pure Land.

“Bodhisattva! Diligently cultivate the three transformations¹⁴⁰ with regard to this profound dharma. Wisdom and concentration will then be completely perfected, and one will immediately transcend the three realms of existence.”

Chijang Bodhisattva asked, “As the Tathāgata has said, nonproduction and nonextinction are impermanent, so extinguish this production and extinction. Once production and extinction have been extinguished, [373c] this calm extinction will be permanent. Because it is permanent, it cannot be excised. That dharma which cannot be excised remains far removed from all the active and motionless dharmas of the three realms of existence. [One should avoid] the conditioned dharmas as if avoiding a fiery pit.

“Through relying on what dharma may one admonish oneself and access that one approach [to dharma]?”¹⁴¹

The Buddha replied, “Admonish your mind concerning the three great matters; access this practice via the three great truths.”

Chijang Bodhisattva asked, “How may one admonish one’s mind in regard to these three matters? How may one access the one practice via the three truths?”

The Buddha replied, “As for the three great matters: the first is cause; the second is fruition; the third is consciousness. These three matters are, in this wise, void and nonexistent from their inception; they are not self [for their natures are void] but instead are true self [for they have no limiting identity]. So how is it that the taint of craving (*trṣṇā*) arises concerning them? Contem-

¹⁴⁰ “The three transformations” (*samhwa*) are glossed by Wōnhyo as the three voidnesses: i.e., the voidness of the characteristic of voidness; the voidness of voidness itself; and the voidness of that which is void. *KSGR* 3, p. 1004b22–25. There is also a proselytic listing: (1) past transformation: previous preachings of the Mahāyāna; (2) adaptable transformation: the bodhisattva entering into saṃsāra in order to rescue beings from their plight; (3) ultimate transformation: prompting those beings to attain complete buddhahood. See *Fa-hua hsüan lun* 7, *T* 1720.34.417a; *Fa-hua i-shu* 7, *T* 1721.34.546a.

¹⁴¹ This question opens another exchange, which is intended to resolve a second doubt remaining from the “Tathāgatagarbha” chapter. As a passage in that chapter said (*VS*, chap. 7, after n. 124), “[At the moment of] cognition, the consciousnesses are permanent. The consciousnesses are perpetually calm and extinct; but that calm extinction is also calm and extinct.” This state would seem so rarified to the average person, however, that he might think that there were no means available for him to cultivate his mind and realize calm extinction. *KSGR* 3, p. 1004c3–7.

plate these three matters as being bound¹⁴² by the bonds [*grantha*; of covetousness, ill-will, attachment to rules and rituals, and dogmatic fanaticism] and being aimlessly adrift in the sea of suffering. It is because of such matters that one constantly admonishes oneself.

“As for the three truths: the first truth is that the path to bodhi is equal [in its accessibility, for the bodhi-nature is inherent in all sentient beings], not unequal. The second truth is that great enlightenment is gained through the orthodox knowledge [of the Buddhists], not through the perverse knowledge [of the non-Buddhists]. The third truth is that truth is accessed by not differentiating the practices of wisdom and concentration; truth is not accessed by practicing them randomly. The person who cultivates the path to buddhahood by means of these three truths cannot but attain right enlightenment concerning these dharmas [of the three truths]. Gaining the knowledge of right enlightenment, one spreads immense friendliness, inspires both oneself and others, and achieves the bodhi of the buddhas.”

Chijang Bodhisattva asked, “Lord! Such a dharma would in fact be free from causes and conditions. If a dharma is unconditioned, there then would be no causes that are generated. So how can such a motionless dharma prompt access to the tathāgata[garbha]?”¹⁴³

Wishing to proclaim this meaning, the Tathāgata then recited these gāthās:

The characteristics of all dharmas,
 Their natures are void, nonexistent, and motionless.
 These dharmas are not produced in the present,
 But they are not produced in another time [past and future] either.¹⁴⁴
 Dharmas are neither moving nor motionless,
 As their natures are void, they are calm and extinct,

¹⁴² Following the Koryō II/Taishō reading of *pak* (“to bind”). The Wōnhyo and K’ai-pao recensions wrongly dittograph the following character *p’yo* (“to whirl”; “to be adrift”); *VS*, p. 373c8 n. 14.

¹⁴³ This question initiates an additional exchange concerning a doubt remaining from the “Tathāgatagarbha” chapter. The concluding verse in that chapter said (*VS*, chap. 7, after n. 127), “Transmuting both the subject and object of clinging,/ He accesses the tathāgatagarbha.” It was commonly assumed, however, that realization of the tathāgatagarbha—representing the “equal truth” just discussed, in which the bodhi-nature is inherent in all sentient beings—was not brought about through specific causes and conditions, such as spiritual practice. Hence, how then could this passage imply that there was some explicit soteriological means by which the “subject and object of clinging” were transmuted so that access to the tathāgatagarbha could occur? *KSGR* 3, p. 1005b9–13.

¹⁴⁴ Adapted from *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* (vii.28); see *Chung-lun* 2, T 1564.30.11c11–12. Noted in Liebenthal, p. 366.

Only at the time when their natures are void, calm, and extinct,
 Will those dharmas then appear.
 As they leave behind all characteristics, they abide calmly,
 And as they abide calmly, they are unconditioned.
 All these conditionally produced dharmas,
 Those dharmas are not produced by conditions.
 Because there is no production or extinction due to causes and conditions,
 The natures of production and extinction are void and calm.
 The nature of conditions involves both the subject and object conditions,¹⁴⁵
 These conditions arise from the original condition.
 Hence the production of dharmas is not due to conditions,
 This is also the case with the nonproduction of conditions.
 Dharmas that are produced according to causes and conditions,
 Those dharmas [in turn function as] causes and conditions.
 [Those dharmas which] are characterized by being produced and
 extinguished according to causes and conditions,
 Those are in fact free from production and extinction.
 Those characteristics which are thus, true, and real,
 Originally make no appearance, [374a]
 All dharmas in the present moment,
 Produce their appearances themselves.
 Accordingly that consummately pure origin,
 Is originally not caused by the multitude of forces,
 Precisely when this is subsequently obtained,¹⁴⁶
 One [re]attains the original attainment.¹⁴⁷

At that time, Chijang heard what the Buddha said and his mind-ground
 became enraptured. There was then no one in the congregation who enter-
 tained any further doubts. Once [Chijang] had known all their minds, he
 recited gāthās:

I knew the doubts in all their minds,
 And accordingly questioned cordially and sincerely,
 Through his virtue of great friendliness, the Tathāgata
 Has analyzed [these doubts] and left none remaining.
 Everyone in these two congregations,

¹⁴⁵ Wōnhyo glosses these as the *adhipatipratyaya* (predominant condition) and *ālambanapratyaya* (cooperative condition), respectively; *KSGR* 3, p. 1005c.

¹⁴⁶ Glossed by Wōnhyo as “after [the completion of] the mārga, or what was earlier briefly referred to as ‘the time when these are calmed and extinguished.’” *KSGR* 3, p. 1006a16–17.

¹⁴⁷ Wōnhyo interprets this as meaning that the actualization of enlightenment leads to the re-“attainment” of the original enlightenment. *KSGR* 3, p. 1006a18–20.

Has clearly understood everything.
 Through my understanding, I now
 Proselyte universally all sentient beings.
 Just as the great friendliness of the Buddha,
 Does not allow him to abandon his great vow,
 Hence at that only-child stage,
 [The bodhisattva continues to] linger in defilement.¹⁴⁸

At that time, the Tathāgata addressed the congregation: “This bodhisattva is inconceivable! He constantly relieves sentient beings from their suffering through his great friendliness. If there is a sentient being who keeps the dharma [taught in] this sūtra or keeps this bodhisattva’s name, he then will not fall into the evil destinies, and all obstructions and difficulties will completely vanish. If there are sentient beings who have no extraneous thoughts remaining, but reflect exclusively on the dharma of this sūtra and cultivate and train in it, then this bodhisattva will constantly manifest a transformation body and speak the dharma to them. He will guard and protect those persons, never abandon them even for a moment, and prompt them quickly to attain *anuttarasamyaksambodhi*.

“All of you bodhisattvas! When you proselyte sentient beings, you should encourage all of them to cultivate and train in this decisive, definitive meaning (*nitārtha*) of the Mahāyāna.”

Epilogue

At that time, Ānanda arose from his seat and, coming forward, addressed the Buddha: “As the Tathāgata has said, the Mahāyāna’s aggregate of merits is certain to eradicate the fetters. The inspiration of the enlightenment that is unproduced is inconceivable. What sūtra title should such a teaching be given? How much merit will be forthcoming from receiving and keeping such a sūtra? I beg the Buddha to explain this for us, out of his friendliness and compassion.”

¹⁴⁸ “Only-child stage” (*ilcha chi*) is a term that derives from the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra*; see the description at *Ta-pan-nieh-p’an ching* 16, T 374.12.458c–459a, upon which Wōnhyo seems to draw in his explanation: “ ‘Only-child stage’ (*ilcha chi*) is the first *bhūmi* and above. [There,] one has already realized that all sentient beings are equal, and one regards all sentient beings as if they were one’s own only child. . . . ‘Linger in defilement’: Although a bodhisattva gains the equality of all dharmas, by means of his power of expedients, he does not abandon defilements (*kleśa*) This is because, if one were to abandon all defilements and proclivities (*anusāya*) and thence access nirvāṇa, this would controvert one’s original vow.” KSGR 3, p. 1006a29–1006b4.

The Buddha replied, “Oh son of good family! The name of this sūtra is inconceivable. It has been protected by all the buddhas of antiquity; it is able to catalyze access into the sea of the tathāgatas’ all-embracing knowledge. If there is a sentient being who keeps this sūtra, then he will have nothing more to seek in any other sūtras. The dharma [teaching] of this scripture encodes all dharmas and includes the essentials of all sūtras. It is the unifying thread (*kyejong*) of the dharmas of all these sūtras. As far as the title of this sūtra is concerned, it is named *Sōp taesŭng kyōng* (*Mahāyānasamgraha-sūtra*; Compendium of Mahāyāna scripture); *Kūmgang sammae* (*Vajrasamādhi*), and *Muryang-ŭi chong* (Source of immeasurable doctrine). If there is a person who receives and keeps this scripture, [374b] he will be called one who welcomes and supports [lit., receives and keeps] hundreds of thousands of buddhas. Such meritorious qualities may be compared to the limitlessness of space, which is inconceivable. It is this sūtra alone with which I now charge you.”

Ānanda asked, “What sort of person, with what sort of mental attitude, would receive and keep this scripture?”

The Buddha replied, “Oh son of good family! The mind of the person who receives and keeps this scripture is free from gain or loss and constantly cultivates the religious life (*brahmacaryā*). If he constantly gladdens his mind and calms its conceptual proliferation (*prapañca*), then even amidst the crowded masses, his mind will remain ever concentrated; even if he dwells in the household life, he will not grasp at the three realms of existence.

“There are five types of merits accruing from this person’s appearance in the world. First, he is honored by the congregation. Second, he will not die an untimely death. Third, he will eruditely rebut perverse opinions. Fourth, he will joyfully ferry across sentient beings. Fifth, he will be able to access the sanctified path. It is this sort of person who will receive and keep this scripture.”

Ānanda asked, “Will one who ferries across all sentient beings be as worthy of receiving offerings as that person, or not?”

The Buddha replied, “Such a person is able to become a great field of merit for sentient beings. He constantly practices great knowledge, and displays both expedients and truth. He receives all manner of offerings from the four saṃghas upon which one may depend,¹⁴⁹ including even their

¹⁴⁹ A listing that derives from *Nirvāna Sūtra*. (1) The educated *pṛthagjana* (ordinary person) who keeps precepts and preaches dharma, but still retains the defiled nature; he has not yet reached the first *bhūmi*. (2) The *śrotaāpanna* (streamwinner) and *sakṛdāgāmin* (once-returner); these are bodhisattvas who have reached the first *bhūmi* and received prediction of their future buddhahood, but have not yet reached the second or third *bhūmi*. (3) The *anāgāmin* (nonre-

heads, eyes, marrow, and gray matter. So how could he not but receive clothes and provisions? Oh son of good family! Such a person is your spiritual mentor, your bridge; how could an ordinary person not but worship him?”

Ānanda asked, “If, at that person’s place, one receives and keeps this sūtra and worships that person, how much merit will one accrue?”

The Buddha answered, “If, furthermore, there is a person who gives a city-full of gold and silver, it would not measure up to the inconceivable amount [of merit] forthcoming from receiving and keeping one four-line gāthā of this scripture at that person’s place, or from worshipping that person. It is inconceivable!¹⁵⁰

“Oh son of good family! The mind of a person who encourages all sentient beings to keep this sūtra will be constantly concentrated; he will never forget his original mind. If one forgets his original mind he then must repent. This practice (dharma) of repentance produces coolness (*śītibhūta*).”

Ānanda asked, “If one repents, don’t previous evil deeds recede into the past?”

The Buddha replied, “So it is. It is like bringing a bright lamp into a dark room: that darkness instantly vanishes. Oh son of good family! This is not to speak only of repenting from previous [evil deeds]: indeed all evil deeds can be said to recede into the past.”

Ānanda asked, “What is meant by ‘repentance’?”

The Buddha replied, “By relying on the teachings of this sūtra, one accesses the true and real contemplation; as soon as one accesses that contemplation, all evil deeds will completely vanish. Leaving behind all evil destinies, one will be reborn in the Pure Land, where one will quickly achieve *anuttarasamyaksambodhi*.”

When the Buddha had finished preaching this sūtra, Ānanda, the bodhisattvas, and the great fourfold congregation were all enraptured and elated, and their minds achieved the certitude [that they would attain enlightenment]. Worshipping the Buddha’s feet with their foreheads, they were enraptured and elated, and practiced [his teaching] respectfully.

turner), who has received this prediction and is destined soon to attain *anuttarasamyaksambodhi*. (4) The arhat, who has achieved the tenth *bhūmi*. See *Ta-pan-nieh-p’an ching* 6, T 375.12.637a-c; *Ta-pan-ni-huan ching* 4, T 376.12.875c-876b.

¹⁵⁰ Added following the Koryō II/Taishō recension; VS, p. 374b17. This line is missing in Wōnhyo; KSGR 3, p. 1007b12.

GLOSSARY OF CHINESE LOGOGRAPHS

- Ado hwasang* 阿道和尚
ammara 菴摩羅
Amnyang-kun 押梁國
a-mo-lo 阿摩羅
an-chu 安住
an-hsin 安心
an-mo-lo 菴摩羅
An Shih-kao 安世高
Ansim-sa 安心寺
Chajang 慈藏
Chakchegŏn 作帝建
ch'an 禪
Ch'ang-an 長安
Changsan 章山
Chan-jan 湛然
Ch'an-men ching 禪門經
chaün purhyŏn 自隱不現
ch'e 體
Ch'egwan 諦觀
ch'eng-fa hsing 稱法行
Ch'eng-kuan 澄觀
chen-ju 真如
chen-shih fa 真實法
chi 知
Chiang-nan 江南
Chidök 智德
chien-chiao 漸教
chigwan 止觀
Chih-chou 智周
Chih-i 智顛
chih-kuan 止觀
Chih-sheng 智昇

- Chih-yen 智儼
ch'im 斟
chi-mieh jen 寂滅忍
 Ching-chüeh 淨覺
 Ching-chung 淨衆
 Ching-t'u 淨土
 Ching-ying Hui-yüan 淨影慧遠
 Ch'ing-yüan Hsing-ssu 青原行思
 Chinhüng (king) 眞興
chin-kang-pi ting san-mei 金剛壁定三昧
Chin-kang san-mei ching 金剛三昧經
Chin-kang shang-wei ching 金剛上味經
 Chinul 知訥
chinyö 眞如
 Chisön Tohöñ 智誦道憲
 Chi-tsang 吉藏
 Ch'oe Ch'iwön 崔致遠
 Ch'ogae 初開
chölp'il 絕筆
ch'ön/ch'uan 喘
ch'ongji 總持
 Chöngt'o 淨土
chonsim 存心
chonsin 存神
chon/tsun 存
chu (abiding) 住
chüan 卷
ch'uan 喘
 Ch'uan-ao *ta-shih* 傳澳大師
Ch'uan fa-pao chi 傳法寶記
 Chuang-tzu 莊子
chüan-shih 轉識
 Chu-chen 誅震
chüeh-ch'a 覺察
 Chüeh-fan Hui-hung 覺範慧洪
chüeh-kuan 覺觀
Chüeh-kuan lun 絕觀論
ch'üeh-pen 闕本
 Chuhaeng-sa 住行寺

- chūk* (is in fact) 即
chūk (then) 則
 Chunbōm 遵範
Ch'un-ch'iu 春秋
chung 中
chung-shu 忠恕
 Enchō 圓超
 Ennin 圓仁
Erh-ju ssu-hsing lun 二入四行論
Fa-ching 法經
Fa-ch'ung 法冲
Fa-hsiang 法相
Fa-ju 法如
Fa-jung 法融
fan 返
fan-chao 返照
fan-ching ta-teh 翻經大德
Fan-hsing p'in 梵行品
fan-yüan k'an 返源看
Fa-shang 法上
Fa-tsang 法藏
Fa-wang ching 法王經
Fa-yen 法眼
fa-yün ti 法雲地
Fei Ch'ang-fang 費長房
fo chi-shih hsün 佛即是心
Fo-hsing lun 佛性論
Fu Chien 符堅
Fu Hsi 傅翕
Fu ta-shih 傅大師
Haedong ko Sinhaeng sōnsa chi pi 海東故信行禪師之碑
Haengjang 行狀
Haengmyōng-sa 行名寺
haengnip/hsing-ju 行入
Haet'al 解脫
hoegwang panjo/hui-kuang fan-chao 迴光返照
hoesin/hui-shen 迴神
Hogō 踰踞
hoguk pulgyo 護國佛教

- hogwe* 胡(胡)跪
ho-ho 和合
Hsiang-fa 像法
hsien-ch'ien ti 現前地
hsin 信
hsin-an 心安
hsing 行
hsing-ju 行入
hsin-hsiang 心相
hsin pu-ch'i 心不起
Hsin-wang ching 心王經
Hsin-wang p'u-sa shuo t'ou-t'o ching 心王菩薩說投陀經
Hsiu-hsin yao-lun 修心要論
Hsüan-tsang 玄奘
Hsüan-tse 玄蹟
Hsüan-tsung (emperor) 玄宗
hsün 旬
Hua-yen 華嚴
Hua-yen chin-kuan ch'ao 華嚴錦冠鈔
Hui-chiao 慧皎
Hui-k'o 慧可
Hui-kuan 慧觀
hüimang 希望
Hui-neng 慧能
Hui-ssu 慧思
Hüiyang-san 曦陽山
Hu-kuo p'in 護國品
Hung-chou 洪州
Hung-jen 弘忍
hwadu/hua-t'ou 話頭
hwangnyong 黃龍
Hwangnyong-sa 黃龍寺
Hwaö'm 華嚴
Hwaö'm chongyo 華嚴宗要
Hwaö'mgyö'ng chongyo 華嚴經宗要
Hwaö'mgyö'ng-so 華嚴經疏
hwarang 花郎
Hyangjön 鄉傳
Hyeün 惠隱

Hyet'ong 惠通

Hyoso 孝昭(王)

i (different) 異

Ich'adon 異次頓

i-chieh 義解

i-ching (anomalous sūtras) 異經

i-ch'u 異出

iip/erh-ju 二入

iip/li-ju 理入

il 一

ilcha chi 一子地

ilch'e 一切

i/li (inspiration) 利

Ilmi chinsil musang musaeng kyölchöng silche pon'gangnihaeng

一味真實無相無生決定實際本覺利行

ilmi kwanhaeng/li-wei kuan-hsing 一味觀行

il-pöpkye 一法界

Imok 璃目

in (acceptance) 忍

Inwang-kyöng 仁王經

ip/ju 入

Iryön 一然

Jen-wang ching 仁王經

ju cheng-ting wei 入正定位

ju-kuan 入觀

Ju-lai kuang-ming-chüeh p'in 如來光明覺品

ju nieh-p'an 入涅槃

ju-tao 入道

Ju-tao an-hsin yao-fang-pien fa-men 入道安心要方便法門

ju-ting 入定

Ju-tsang lu 入藏錄

kae 開

Kaesöng 開城

kagyong/chüeh-yung 覺用

kahaeng-chi 加行智

kail 可一

Kaji-san 迦智山

kakch'al 覺察

kakkwan 覺觀

- Kaksŭng (Enlightenment Vehicle) 覺乘
 Kaksŭng (Horn Rider) 角乘
 k'an 看
 k'an-hsin 看心
 kanhwa/k'an-hua 看話
 Kanhye-chi 乾慧地
 Kegon engi emaki 華嚴緣起繪卷
 ki (to activate) 起
 Kim Hŏnjŏng 金獻貞
 Kim hwasang 金和尚
 Kim Pusik 金富軾
 Kim Wŏn 金遠
 kŭmgang sammae/chin-kang san-mei 金剛三昧
 Kŭmgang sammaegyŏng-chu 金剛三昧經注
 Kŭmgang sammaegyŏng-ron 金剛三昧經論
 Kŭmgang sammae-kyŏng 金剛三昧經
 Koguryŏ 高句麗
 kong (associated) 共
 kong (cavern) 孔
 kongan/kung-an 公案
 Kongŏzammaikyōgi 金剛三昧經記
 Kongŏzammaikyō ronso 金剛三昧經論疏
 Kongŏzammaikyō shiji 金剛三昧經指事
 Kongŏzammaikyō shiki 金剛三昧經私記
 Koryŏ 高麗
 Kosŏn-sa Sŏdang hwasang t'appi 高仙寺誓幢和上塔碑
 kuan-hsin 觀心
 Kuan-hsin lun 觀心論
 K'uei-chi 窺基
 ku-i-ching 古異經
 Kusan Sŏnmun 九山禪門
 kwanhaeng/kuan-hsing 觀行
 kwŏn 卷
 kyejong 繫宗
 kyŏlchŏng sŏng 決定性
 Kyŏngju 慶州
 kyŏnsŏng/chien-hsing 見性
 Kyunyŏ 均如
 Leng-ch'ieh jen-fa chi 楞伽人法記

- Liang-chou 涼州
Liang-t'u i-ching lu 涼土異經錄
 Liao-tung 遼東
li-ju 理入
li-kou san-mei 離垢三昧
 Lin-chi 臨濟
 Lin-chi I-hsüan 臨濟義玄
liu-ju fa-men 六入法門
liu-li 琉璃
lüeh-shu 略疏
lun 論
malna [sik] 末那識
miao-chüeh 妙覺
miao-hsüeh ti 妙學地
 Mich'u (king) 味鄒
mo-chao hsieh Ch'an 默照邪禪
moryun 毛輪
 Muae 無礙
mubunbyöl-chi/wu-fen-pieh chih 無分別智
 Muju 無住
 Mukhoja 墨胡子
 Munmu (king) 文武
munüi t'arani 文義陀羅尼
munyöm/wu-nien 無念
Muryangüi chong 無量義宗
Muryangüijong-kyöng 無量義宗經
Muryangsu chongyo 無量壽宗要
 Musang 無相
musoüi/wu-so-wei 無所為
 Muyöm 無染
myogak/miao-chüeh 妙覺
 Myöngnang 明朗
 Naksan-sa 洛山寺
 Nam-ak 南岳
 Nangji 朗智
ning-jan 凝然
 Niu-t'ou 牛頭
non 論
 Nulchi (king) 訥祇

- öñödödan* 言語道斷
Paekche 百濟
pak (to bind) 縛
p'alsang pangp'yön 八相方便
p'an-chiao 判教
pan'gyo 判教
panjo/fan-chao 返照
P'an piryang-ron 判比量論
panwön kan 返源看
pao-i 抱一
Pao-t'ang 保唐
pao-yüan hsing 報冤行
Pei-Liang 北涼
Pei tsung 北宗
pen-chüeh 本覺
pi-kuan 壁觀
p'in 品
Po-jo-hsin ching chu-chieh 般若心經注解
Pömhæng 梵行
Pömil 梵日
Pömnang 法朗
pon'gak/pen-chüeh 本覺
Pongnim-san 鳳林山
pon silche/pen shih-chi 本實際
Pöphüing (king) 法興
porri 本利
Poyang 寶壤
P'u-chi 普寂
pudong/pu-tung 不動
Puk-san 北山
Pulchi 佛地
punbyölfen-pieh 分別
pun'gu ö paeksong 分軀於百松
Punhwang-sa 芬皇寺
Pusök-sa 浮石寺
pu-ssu-i san-mei 不思義三昧
P'u-t'i ta-mo 菩提達摩
pu-tung ti 不動地
p'yo (to whirl; to be adrift) 飄

- saengmyōl* 生滅
Sagul-san 闍崛山
Saja-san 獅子山
samhwa 三化
san-ching 散經
San-i 三一
san-mei ching 三昧經
san-mei-ching lei 三昧經類
san-tsang 三藏
Seng-chao 僧肇
Seng-ts'an 僧璨
Seng-yu 僧祐
shan-hui ti 善慧地
Shan-tung 山東
Shan-wu-wei 善無畏
She-lun 攝論
sheng-mieh 生滅
Shen-hsiu 神秀
Shen-hui 神會
shen-i 神異
shih 世
shih-hsing 十行
Shih hui-hsiang p'in 十迴向品
shih-i p'ien-ju 拾遺編入
shih-shih wu-ai 事事無礙
shou-chen pao-i 守真抱一
shou-chih 守直
shou-chung 守中
shou-hsin 守心
shou-i 守一
shou-i ning-jan 守一凝然
shou-i pu-i 守一不移
shou-i teh-tu 守一得度
shou pen chen-hsin 守本真心
shou tzu pen-hsin 守自本心
shu 蜀
Sidan 始旦
sigak/shih-chüeh 始覺
Silla 新羅

Silla-kuk Muju Kaji-san Porim-sa si Pojo sŏnsa yŏngt'ap pimyoŋg

新羅國武州迦智山寶林寺諡普照禪師靈塔碑銘

sim 心

Simmun hwajaeng-ron 十門和諍論

Simwang/Hsin-wang 心王

Sinhaeng 信行/神行/慎行

sini 神異

Sinmun (king) 神文

Sinp'yŏn chejong kyojang ch'ongnok 新編諸宗教藏總錄

siphaeng/shih-hsing 十行

Sŏl Ch'ong 薛聰

Sŏndŏk 善德

sŏng 性

Sŏngdŏk 聖德

sŏ 庶

so 疏

Sŏngju-san 聖住山

Sŏp taesŭng-kyŏng 攝大乘經

suil/shou-i 守一

sui-yŭan hsing 隨緣行

Suje 樹提

Sumi-san 須彌山

sun 旬

Sŭngdun 僧遁

Sŭngnang 僧郎

Sunji 順之

Suro 首羅

susim/shou-hsin 守心

Su-tsung 肅宗

suyŏn/sui-yŭan 隨緣

Ta-chao Chih-k'ung 大照志空

tae (analogue) 待

tae (great) 大

Tae-an 大安

Taebŏmhaeng 大梵行

T'ai-i 太一

T'ai-shang Lao-chŭn 太上老君

T'ai-tsung 太宗

T'ang 唐

T'ang Hsin-lo-kuo Huang-lung-ssu Yüan-hsiao chuan

唐新羅國黃龍寺元曉傳

T'an-lin 曇林

tan-pen shih-i 單本失譯

Tao-an 道安

Tao-hsin 道信

Tao-hsüan 道宣

Tao-hsüan 道璿

Tao-sheng 道生

Tao-shih 道世

Tao-shun 道舜

teng-chüeh 等覺

t'i 體

T'ien-t'ai 天台

t'ien-tsun 天尊

Ti-lun 地論

T'i-wei Po-li ching 提謂波利經

tünggak/teng-chüeh 等覺

Toüi 道義

T'ongdo-sa 通度寺

Tongni-san 桐裡山

t'ong pulgyo 通佛教

Toryun 道倫

Tsan-ning 贊寧

Ts'ao-tung 曹洞

tso-ch'an 坐禪

Tsui-miao sheng-ting ching 最妙勝定經

tsun 尊

tsung 宗

Tsung-mi 宗密

tsun-san 存三

Tu Cheng-lun 杜正倫

tui-chih 對治

Tullyun 遁倫

tun-chiao 頓教

Tung-shan fa-men 東山法門

Tung-shan *wu-sheng* fa-men 東山無生法門

tun-wu 頓悟

Tzu-hsüan 子璿

- tzu-yin pu-hsien* 自隱不現
üi (idea) 意
üi (object) 義
Üich'ön 義天
üihae 義解
Üisang 義湘
üisik 意識
üngju kakkwan 凝住覺觀
ün i purhyön 隱而不顯
Unjöng 運精
üp (to pour) 挹
Wai-yü 外域
Wang Kõn (king) 王建
Wang Pi 王弼
wei-ching 偽經
Wei-shih 唯識
wõl (to transcend) 越
Wõlch'ung 月忠
Wõnch'ük 圓測
Wõnhyo 元曉
Wõnhyo pulgi 元曉不羈
wõnsõng/yüan-sheng 圓聲
wõnyung/yüan-jung 圓融
Wu Chao 武曩
Wu-chu 無住
wu-fa 無法
Wu fang-pien 五方便
wu-hsing 無性
wu-kou ti 無垢地
wu-nien 無念
wu-sheng fa 無生法
wu-shih 無時
wu-so-chiu hsing 無所求行
Wu Yüeh 吳越
yak chon kwansim/jo ts'un kwan-hsin 若存觀心
yakso 略疏
Yang-chou Kao-li-seng Chih-teh 揚州高麗僧智德
Yen Fo-t'iao 嚴佛調
Yen-shou 延壽

Yen-ts'ung 彥琮

yin-fu 隱覆

yin-yang 陰陽

yong 用

Yongō i 龍魚異

yüan 緣

Yüan-ch'eng 圓澄

yüan-hsing ti 遠行地

yukhaeng/liu-hsing 六行

yu (milk) 乳

yung 用

Yung-hui 永徽

yuri 琉璃

Yusik 唯識

Yusim allak-to 遊心安樂道

Yu Tang Silla-kuk ko Hūiyang-san Pongam-sa kyo si Chijōng taesa Chōkcho
chi t'ap pimyoŋg 有唐新羅國故曦陽山鳳岩寺教諡智證大師寂照之塔碑銘

(G.10)

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